AUG/SEPT 1961
TWO SHILLINGS

Ballet TODAY

THE MAKING OF A BALLET

OVER AND OVER AGAIN THE DANCERS REPEAT EVERY MOVEMENT UNTIL THE CHOREOGRAPHER IS SATISFIED

MEMBERS OF FESTIVAL BALLET REHEARSE "THE SNOW MAIDEN" WATCHED BY THE CELEBRATED CHOREOGRAPHER VLADIMIR BOURMEISTER

REVIEWS AND PICTURES OF THE BALLET APPEAR IN THIS ISSUE

Ballet TODAY

welcome from the Mayor
l to r, George Brightwell, representing ABC Television who sponsored the Festival, Colette Marchand, Anton Dolin, the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress of Coventry, George Hall, General Administrator of the Midlands Festival of Ballet

welcome from the young dancers
(pupils of Miss Grace Cone, who took part in the show)
l to r, Rosella Hightower, Milorad Miskovitch, Natalie Krassovska, Carla Fracci, Margrethe Schanne, Jack Carter, Kjeld Noack. Mr. Carter choreographed *Festival Finale* specially for the occasion

A great welcome from Coventry

welcome from the audience
Anton Dolin (seen here in his Sun King costume in the wings) received a great ovation at the close of the Festival. Mr. Dolin was presented with a laurel wreath won earlier in the day by Squadron Leader Iles in the King's Cup Air Race

the penalty of fame
"May I have your autograph please" Milorad Miskovitch obliges the young dancers

All photos by courtesy of ABC Television Ltd.

No. 7 VOL. 13

In This Issue

EDITOR'S LOG ... ... The social month 3

NEWS FROM HERE AND THERE 5

LONDON REVIEWS ... ... Remainder of the Kirov Season 6
Ballet Rambert 10
Festival Ballet's Snow Maiden 11

THE SNOW MAIDEN ... ... in Florence 12
and in pictures 14

INTERVIEW WITH KONSTANTIN SERGEYEV 9

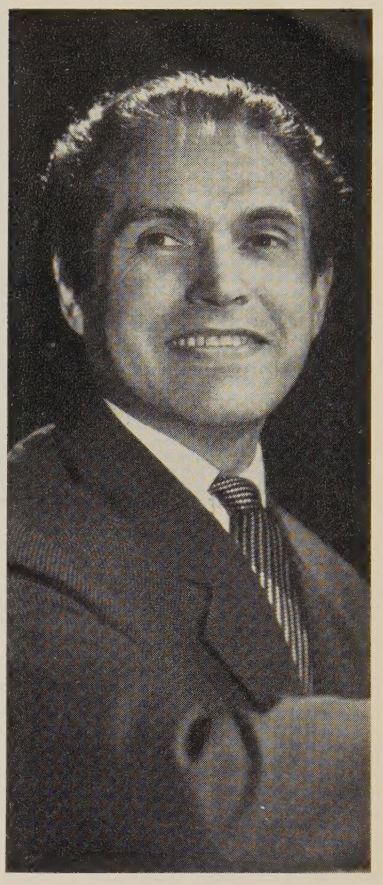
THE DANCING WORLD ... ... Reviews and pictures from Chicago, San Francisco, Lisbon, Belgrade, Johannesburg, Paris, Munich 16

BALLET PROGRAMMES FOR THE MONTH 21

NEW RECORDINGS 23

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 25

THE CAREER OF PETER VAN DIJK 26



Konstantin Sergeyev
Photo : Houston Rogers

BALLET TODAY
EDITED and Published by
ESTELLE HERF

Choosing the cover picture

It was very difficult to resist all the lovely pictures I received of Belinda Wright as the Snow Maiden, and print instead a very workmanlike picture of members of the Company at rehearsal. But I made this choice as a token of appreciation of two very fine artists—who worked quietly with one of our Companies for three months, gave of themselves unsparingly, endeared themselves to the entire Company with whom they worked, and then, when their work was done left quietly and unobtrusively for their own country—Mr. and Mrs. Bourmeister.

in the picture

left to right : (standing) Jelko Yuresha, dancer from Yugoslavia (who took the part of Leil in the ballet) assisting Mr. Bourmeister as interpreter.
(seated in the foreground) : Jeannette Minty (behind) Gillian Shane, two of the "snowflakes" on opening night.
Vladimir Bourmeister
Peter White ("Father Frost") Belinda Wright (the "Snow Maiden") and Jean Pierre Alban (who was "Father Frost" at the second performance).

Midlands Festival

VISITING Royalty could not have had a greater welcome than did the Midlands Festival of Ballet stars when they arrived in Coventry on the 9th July ready for the opening on the 11th. Approaching from the famous M.1. motorway one noted the signposts pointing to Coventry bore the sign "Midlands Festival of Ballet" and arriving in the city itself we found not only the Broad Gate had been decorated, and the city bedecked with flags, but also the flags of the six nations of the dancers represented at the Festival were floating in the breeze from the balcony of the Hotel Leofric, where all the dancers stayed.

editor's log

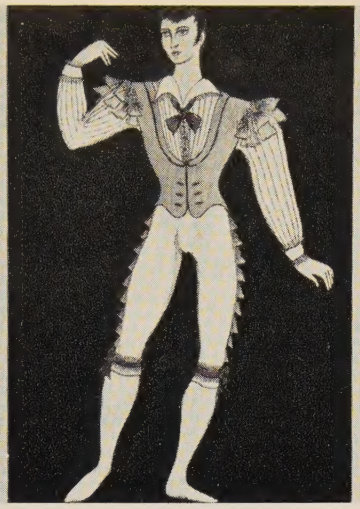
My pictures (opposite) show the civic welcome which followed, and it was clear that Coventry has not forgotten the donation made towards the building of their new cathedral in 1958 when ABC Television, the sponsors of the present Festival, then televised the Festival of the Arts. It was the success of that programme which inspired Mr. Dolin and the television company to embark on this new project.

On opening night in the theatre massed with flowers, a fanfare of trumpets by the trumpeters and drummers of the Seventh Battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment saluted the arrival of the five principal Lord Mayors of the Midlands and a very distinguished audience.

The programme, which I gave in full in last month's issue, was long but well balanced. One came away with somewhat bewildered impressions of Krassovska's manège, Hightower's foettés, Prokovsky's double tour en l'air, a new, slimmer and even more beautiful Carla Fracci, John Gilpin back in his old form leaping tremendously high out of the window in *Le Spectre* and dancing a delicious *Harlequinade* with Fracci, against a backcloth of gold leaf. As relief to the "fireworks" came the charming Bournonville period piece *Kermesse in Bruges*, danced by Margrethe Schanne and Kjeld Noack, which they followed later in the programme with an excerpt from *La Sylphide*. Marchand and Miskovitch showed their versatility in two widely contrasting items, the bravura pas de deux from *Soirée Musicale* and *The Duel*, a highly dramatic work. The evening came to a close with Jack Carter's *Festival Finale*, a delightful and novel way of bringing the dancers on to the stage in couples to take their bows.

And as for Anton Dolin, I simply do not know how he mustered the energy to produce his *Pas de Quatre* (with Hightower, Krassovska, Fracci and Schanne), dance *Bolero* in the first half, and *Le Roi Soleil* in the last half of the programme. He had been working from 9 a.m. Sunday until 2 a.m. Monday, rehearsing, supervising the lighting, and all the hundred and one things that go to make up a show. Opening night was on Tuesday, with a party on stage after the show, nobody got to bed until 3 a.m. Yet the following morning when I went to rehearsal

OUR NEXT ISSUE WILL BE PUBLISHED ON 28TH SEPTEMBER



Norman McDowell's designs for the film of Elssler's life

left to right :
Fanny Elssler as Natalie, or the Swiss Milkmaid

Her partner and lover Stuhlmuller in La Jolie Fille de Gand

Taglioni in La Sylphide

EDITOR'S LOG continued

at the theatre Mr. Dolin was already there supervising the run-through of the programme for the technicians who were to record the show for television the following day. (This programme went out over the entire ITV Network on Sunday 16th July.)

And, bless you, you did not, as I pointed out to you last month, need a second asking, you turned up to fill the theatre receiving each item so enthusiastically that the recorded applause ran to 25 minutes, making the programme run half-an-hour late.

As a result of this success Mr. George Hall was asked by the Lord Bishop and the Lord Mayor of Coventry to try to form another Festival to coincide with the opening of the new cathedral next summer, with Anton Dolin as Artistic Director.

However, as there are to be a series of Festivals to celebrate the opening, commencing 25th May to 17th June (including a visit from the Royal Ballet 4th-9th June) Mr. Hall felt it would be better to hold the second Midlands Festival of Ballet from the 3rd to 15th September (1962) when it is hoped that the ABC Television will again be the sponsors.

And, one thing leads to another, Mr. Hall is now considering a Festival of Ballet in London at the Albert Hall next year. Why not ? Music Festivals are held all over the country, and there is no-one more able to organise these events than Mr. Hall. He will of course need sponsors, and here is an opportunity for commercial firms to give their support.

Fund for Preobrajenska

I felt a bit guilty about it all seeing that the dancers were so busy, but during the time I spent at the Festival I asked the dancers to sign 25 copies of the current issue of the magazine bearing their photographs. With their usual good-natured charm they did so although they had no idea what I wanted them for. A copy bearing the ten signatures will be sent to the first twenty-five applicants who write in to tell me that they are subscribing to the fund for Preobrajenska who is in hospital in Paris with a broken hip. (See "The Value of a Dancer" in *Letters to the Editor* this issue for the address to which donations should be sent). Write to *me* for your signed copy of the magazine.

A minimum subscription of 5/- will secure a copy, but I am hoping that some of you will be able to afford more. It is a good cause.

Olga Preobrajenska

Editor's Day

I DO NOT know whether my two contemporaries share equally with me the number of enquiries in connection with the world of ballet, but if they do then there must be a great deal more interest in its activities than even we suppose.

On one day last month, whilst struggling to cope with my usual heavy post and get the remainder of the new issue to press, my telephone rang: "Could I lend Thomson Newspapers any photographs on the Bolshoi Ballet production of *Romeo and Juliet*. (This firm recently published a half-a-crown book on the Kirov Ballet, and six others at the same price are to follow—all by George Hall.)

I dealt with this and answered a letter from a gentleman in Malta who had read our article on the ballet companies in Holland (June issue) and wanted their addresses so that he could call upon them when he arrived in that country.

The telephone rang again. The Press Relations for Wall's ice-cream wanted to know whether I had published a picture of the tremendous gateau made by the firm for the Leningrad Ballet reception. I had. Two, one of Inna Zubkovskaya cutting the gateau, and the other of Princess Margaret sampling it (July issue). Exit another satisfied customer.

By the time I had finished my letter to Malta the telegram boy was at my door. Robert Paterson our correspondent in Venice, who had made a special journey to Florence to cover the preview of Festival Ballet's *Snow Maiden* had cabled to tell me that the performance, scheduled for Tuesday, would not take place until Thursday—too late for the issue I was then preparing for press. Tremendous activity ensued whilst I prepared an alternative article to fill the empty pages. I was just about through with this when the telephone rang again.

A theatre booking agency was on the line. Would I send them reviews of a Company from the near East who had danced in London, they might be interested in booking them for a tour.

A brief session with a new compositor in an attempt to rectify the wicked spelling of Russian names coupled with French technical terms. We compromised on *entrechat huit*, which for days afterwards became "entry-chat hewitt". And then the telephone was passed over to me again. Mr. Madmoud Reda from Cairo had arrived in London. "Did I remember his name ? I had published an article on his troupe in our March issue". John Haylock, who had written the article, had previously been our correspondent in Tokyo. In Cairo on holiday he had come across Mr. Reda's forty-three strong troupe who were enjoying a great success in that city. "Mr. Reda knew no-one in England—only *Ballet Today*, could I see him" ? I invited him to dinner, he stayed the night and left next morning to join his Company arriving in Stuttgart to commence a tour of Germany.

If anybody thinks I have enough material here for a TV series—perhaps on the lines of "Deadline Midnight" (possible title *Emergency Ward 15, Upper Brighton Road*), no offers please until after the 15th September. As soon as this issue is out I throw my poor unsuspecting secretary in at the deep end to cope with the daily problems whilst I go on holiday. Not, as you may think to laze my days away, but to prepare another issue ready to go to press when I return. An Editor's Day is *Never* Done.

News from here and there

ELSSLER'S STORY

Last month I reported that a film is to be made of the life of Fanny Elssler. On the opposite page I reproduce some of Norman McDowell's designs for this Belgian-German production, which is also to be presented as a stage ballet, with Jack Carter as choreographer. In addition to designing for the film Norman McDowell will dance Stühlmuller, Fanny Elssler's partner.

FRANCE

S. A. S. Prince Pierre of Monaco flew in from Athens to preside over the meeting of judges awarding the "Prix Terpsichore", a scholarship presented annually by Alice Nikitina in memory of Serge Diaghilev, with whose Company she was a star. At this, the sixth year of its institution, the prize went to an eleven-year-old girl from Vietnam—Hoan Pham-Thi, a pupil of Madame Nikitina. Liliane Passous from Nice was awarded a diploma of merit. The jury was composed of M. Jacques Bourgeois, President of the Association of Theatre Critics, Martine Cadieu, one of the best known critics in Paris, "Miss France 1959" (who was also a pupil of Nikitina's for six years before winning the beauty award and becoming a film star) and Madame Nikitina herself.

Amongst other distinguished guests present at the meeting were President of the International Cultural Organisation M. J. Paul Boncour, Theatre Director Jacques Hebertot, and the Cultural Attache of the Soviet Embassy. News of the award was given out over the radio from both France and Monte Carlo.

NEW CAREER

DAME ADELINE GENÉE, one of the distinguished guests at the Midlands Festival of Ballet, has a new career! She will be seen on television, with Anton Dolin, telling the story of ballet at the old Empire Theatre London, where she appeared in 1897 and remained as leading dancer for ten years.

KIROV RECORDING

During their season at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden the Kirov Ballet recorded a programme for BBC-TV in a studio at Television Centre. The programme, consisting of the first act of *The Stone Flower*, was transmitted on 6th August. Producer: Margaret Dale.

ARGENTINIAN DANCER IN LONDON

A year ago today Margaret Graham, a 29-year-old Argentinian dancer, was in Montevideo, dancing *Giselle* with Michael Somes and Margot Fonteyn. When the performance was over, Dame Margot praised her performance highly and advised her to visit Britain to attend a Royal Ballet course for experienced professional dancers.

Today, a year later, Miss Graham has a British Council bursary to attend classes at the Royal Ballet School in London.

Miss Graham, who is of Scottish extraction, has been dancing professionally since she was 16 and was a prima ballerina in Argentina at the age of 22.

Her husband, also a leading dancer, is with her on the course.

The Prix Terpsichore

left to right: Martine Cadieu, Jack Bourgeois, Alice Nikitina, S.A.S. Prince Pierre of Monaco, President J. Paul-Boncour, Jacques Hebertot, and the Cultural Attache of the U.S.S.R. Embassy in Paris Mr. Zaika.

see "France" this page

CANADA

David Shields, Principal Dancer of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet has been appointed the new Ballet Master. Mr. Shields has been the company's leading dancer since 1959 when he went to Canada leaving the position of soloist with the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden.

Kenneth Melville
Photo: Tom Davenport

Kenneth Melville has signed to stay on with the National Ballet for another season. He was most unlucky in his first season with the Company, a back injury laid him off for two months. When the Company's season finished in Pittsburg in May, Melville flew to Chicago to be guest teacher at the Allegra School of Ballet whilst Robert Lunnon and his wife Doreen Tempest were on vacation in London.

My photograph above shows Mr. Melville in the role of Captain Belaye in *Pineapple Poll*, which he originally danced opposite Elaine Fifield in Australia, and now with the Canadian National Ballet.

GORE RETURNS TO THE STAGE

It was not an easy decision for Walter Gore to make to return to the stage after a lapse of some years, but it was not known until three weeks before the performance whether the original sets and costumes of his ballet *Night and Silence* could be restored and made ready in time for the Ballet Rambert Season at Sadler's Wells. This made it impossible for another dancer to learn the part, so Mr. Gore had to step in and partner his wife Paula Hinton in the first London performance.

Walter Gore also choreographed a new ballet specially for the Hintlesham Summer Festival at Ipswich, premièred, with several classical and modern works, on July 28th - 29th, directed by Keith Beckett.

MISKOVITCH

Breaking his tour of Spain to dance at the Midlands Festival of Ballet in Coventry, Miskovitch managed to spend two days in London to be present at the first night of Festival Ballet's *Snow Maiden*. He then returned to Spain to join his Company the Ballets Etoiles de Paris. Their tour has been so successful that it has been extended, and the Company have plans to appear in Versailles in the spring of next year to be followed by engagements in North and South America. The number of dancers in the Company has been increased to fifteen, including Janine Monin, Nicole Nogaret, Yvonne Meyer, Claudine Jaquelline and some brilliant male dancers, and the repertoire has been extended to provide three completely different programmes.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

THE Royal Ballet season opens on the 13th September with Nerina and Blair in *La Fille Mal Gardée*. On the 15th the programme is to include the world première of two new ballets: *Diversions* an abstract ballet with music by Arthur Bliss (Music for Strings) and costumes by Philip Prowse, a pupil of Georgiadis, and *Jabez and the Devil*, based on the famous story "The Devil and Daniel Webster" by Stephen Vincent Benet, with choreography by Alfred Rodrigues, specially commissioned music by Arnold Cooke, and scenery by Isabel Lambert. The latter ballet is in two scenes.

LONDON REVIEWS

by FERNAU HALL

remainder of

THE KIROV SEASON

GISELLE

IN its steps the Kirov production of *Giselle* (first shown at Covent Garden on 27th June) differed only in small details from the Bolshoi production on the one hand and the Royal Ballet production on the other : in fact a star from one of these companies could dance as a guest artist in one of the other productions with a relatively small amount of rehearsal. One charming feature of the Kirov production (absent from the Royal Ballet production) was the use of machinery belonging to the period—a balanced arm carrying Giselle down from the wings, and a wheeled truck carrying her across the back.

The most striking (and unsatisfactory) feature of the Kirov production was the change in the characterisation of Albrecht and Hans (the Kirov's name for Hilarion). The producer Konstantin Sergueyev has almost reversed these roles, making Albrecht a complete cad and Hans a good-hearted, upright, somewhat sentimental young man. In fact Albrecht appeared from the beginning as an unprincipled seducer, deceiving the simple village maiden with his talk of love. Hans, in contrast, was a kind of hero—anxious only to do the best for Giselle, and the epitome of simple rustic good-heartedness. Act I ended with Hans centre-stage, sorrowing over Giselle's dead body, and Albrecht lost in obscurity. This interpretation of the story made very good sense *within Act I* ; but it showed no understanding of the peculiar nature of the structure of this ballet. In fact Act II is the soul of the ballet, and can only be made to grow naturally out of Act I if the characters of Albrecht and Hilarion retain major elements of the traditional interpretation.

Fortunately the serious mistake in the characterisation of Albrecht and Hans was counter-balanced by the general rightness of tone and feeling and a number of special felicities The mad scene was very well done, with a flexible and convincing interaction between Giselle, Albrecht, Hans and the members of the corps de ballet. The movements and by-play of the corps de ballet dancers, surging forward and back and " talking " among themselves, were particularly good ; here one could recognize one of the great Maryinsky traditions as the dancers built up their parts with a perfect combination of discipline and individuality. The corps de ballet was equally magnificent in Act II, in the very formal *ballabile* which precedes Giselle's appearance from her grave : they crossed each other with perfect alignment, then changed into diagonal patterns moving forward and outwards in a way which was less breath-taking than the corresponding Bolshoi scene but more subtle and even more beautiful.

The most marvellous of all the Kirov felicities came at the end of the ballet : in fact the staging of the ending was by far the best I have ever seen. Albrecht fell exhausted to the ground, almost fainting, but the implacable Queen of the Wilis forced Giselle to start him dancing again ; he danced a few steps, very weakly, and then fell again—with the Queen of the Wilis triumphantly hastening his end with a powerful, magical gesture. But then church bells announced the dawn—and there was a marvellous still moment when all the Wilis listened to the bells, before slipping back as quiet wraiths into the wings.

The Giselle of Kolpakova was very much what one would expect after seeing her Aurora : pleasant, lightweight, without much variety of mood. Technically the role is not as exacting as that of Aurora, and gave her good chances to show her elevation.

Vladilen Semenov is clearly an artist with real versatility, for he made the Albrecht of Act I very different from Prince Desiré : he brought out all too well the superficiality and caddishness, demanded by the Sergeyev production, putting a rather unpleasant gleam into Albrecht's eye as he swore eternal love to Giselle. In Act II he was able to return to a more traditional interpretation, and portrayed a noble and heart-broken prince with fine sincerity. Presumably we were supposed to assume that grief and remorse had changed Albrecht's character ; in fact the change was so complete that he seemed a different person with the same name.

The scenery designed by Ivanov and Bocharov (who worked at the Maryinsky towards the end of the 19th century) showed the Russian equivalent of late-Victorian taste at its worst : the Act I backcloth was particularly depressing, with its stodgy naturalistic landscape painted in tones of brown gravy. But the costumes were reasonably effective, keeping close to the patterns established when the ballet was first staged in the middle of the 19th century. The Wilis looked charming in simple white dresses ornamented with a long leafy branch.

At intervals throughout the ballet the dancers were crippled by slow tempi, slack rhythms and coarse phrasing. Part of the blame for these tempi no doubt rests with Konstantin Sergeyev ; but Vadim Kalentiev (assistant conductor) must take some of the responsibility. His conducting was in fact far inferior to that of the chief conductor Niazi, whose beat was sensitive and subtle.

SWAN LAKE

IMMEDIATELY the curtain rose on 30th June on the first act of *Swan Lake* it was obvious that we were to be presented with a production which, pictorially at least, stood head and shoulders above its predecessors. Simon Virsaladze (chief designer) proved by his Act I setting that—contrary to what one might have supposed from his designs for *The Stone Flower* and *Beauty*—he has a feeling for the total stage picture, not just for costumes : what we saw was an asymmetrical, skilfully lit open space beside a palace, with imaginative suggestions of trees arching over from one side, painted in subtle shades of green and blue, in a feathery impressionistic technique that slightly recalled Corot.

The rest of the settings lived up to the promise of Act I. Act II was much the same as Act I, except that the backcloth was used for a very skilful projection of the moving waters of the lake ; the dummy swans (complete with reflections) moved through the projected waves with uncanny credibility. The costumes were on average quite as good as in the other ballets designed by Virsaladze ; the corps de ballet girls in Act I looked rather odd, being too elegant for peasants and too simple and uniform for court ladies, but in Act III he achieved remarkable results with a very limited range of colours—mainly black and white, with some gold and silver and a few isolated splashes of red.

In fact the whole production showed assurance, good taste and consistency. Quite rightly, Sergeyev took far more liberties with Petipa's dreary choreography for Act I than with Ivanov's magnificently poetic and expressive choreography for Acts II and IV. It cannot be said that the synthetic semi-classical " peasant " group dances arranged by Sergeyev in Act I were much better than those arranged by Petipa—this is a very unrewarding genre—but at least they had the interest of novelty. The jester was also a novelty to us, though he formed part of the original Gorsky production ; his gags were slightly embarassing, but his actual dancing took the form of a superb display of virtuosity by Alexandre Livshitz. With his lean sardonic face and strong technique this artist was perfectly cast in a very difficult role : his *grande pirouette*, coming after marvellous examples of more familiar types of pirouette, aroused cheers from the audience.

In Acts II and IV Sergeyev preserved Ivanov's steps almost intact, but introduced a number of variations in the stage patterns. These new patterns remained true to the spirit of Ivanov, and some were very beautiful—notably the complex contrapuntal pattern of movement in which some swans were raising their arms quickly up above their heads while others were slowly bending low, and a scene in which four lines of four swans moved about the stage independently. In the first half of Act IV Sergeyev was not so successful, for in his attempt to build up to a happy ending (with Siegfried defeating the evil

magician) he blurred the story line. Here, and even more in Act II, he was severely hampered by the familiar Soviet reluctance to use conventional mime : the first meeting between Siegfried and Odette in Act II lost much of its poignancy because they could not communicate with each other, and indulged in some rather aimless poses while the orchestra played their wonderful mime music.

Act III was very close to the version familiar to us. Just as in the Royal Ballet's production, Rothbart took much too high and mighty a tone for a stranger visiting a palace uninvited—and it was surely unwise of him to give away his sinister powers by causing the lights of the palace to dim before he entered ! But the designer cleverly accounted for Rothbart's arrogance by giving him a crown, thereby establishing him as someone at least equal in rank to the Princess.

Irina Gensler was outstanding as one of the Spanish dancers, bending her head and shoulders backward in marvellous supple curves and flashing her eyes with all the abandon one remembered from her equally splendid performance as the Gypsy Girl in *The Stone Flower*. In fact the Gorsky version of the Spanish dance was on the whole performed so much better than the Czardas and Mazurka that one wondered if Sergeyev did not intend to make a sharp distinction between the slightly sinister bravura of Rothbart's suite and the slightly decadent court versions of Hungarian and Polish dances, performed presumably by guests properly invited by the Princess. Whether Sergeyev intended this or not, the effect was unsatisfactory, for the result was an anticlimax.

The most serious weakness of this fine production was the casting of the title role. Anna Zubkovskaya (June 30 and matinée of July 1) showed many of the good qualities characteristic of the Petersburg- Leningrad school—notably a supple back, high extension of the leg, strong well-arched feet, good épaulement, brilliant supported pirouettes, and a line which was on the whole free from any fussy excrescences (though her hands were often stiff). But her acting was very superficial : in Act III, in the relatively straightforward role of the hard and sinister Odile, she looked quite assured, but the tender, tragic lyricism of Acts II and IV was quite beyond her. Even more serious was the fact that her dancing was quite unmusical.

Olga Moiseyeva (evening of July 1 and July 3) acted Odette-Odile better than Zubkovskya ; in Act II and Act IV she put on the conventional mask of the tragic Swan-Queen, and in Act III she was rather more subtle and interesting with facial expressions that were apparently simple and charming, though hiding inner coldness. But her dancing showed much the same serious flaws as it did in the role of Princess Florine—notably affected hands, stiff arms and coarse phrasing. Like Zubkovskaya, she made her strongest impact in the long adage in Act II, where (supported by her partner) she developed the slow continuous flow of movement in the manner originated by Ulanova.

Vladilen Semenov made a fine Siegfried —acting well, partnering superbly and dancing his variation with ease, ballon and fire. He was particularly good in performing big steps of elevation.

Alla Sizova was outstanding in the pas de trois. She has exceptional elevation, even for a Soviet dancer of today (when the general standard of elevation is very high), as well as a pure style, good hands, a supple back which helps her to lift her legs very high without apparent effort, exquisite feet, and great charm of facial expression.

Four soloists did very well indeed in the pas de quatre of the little swans : Ludmila Alexeyeva, Galina Ivanova, Galina Kekisheva and Galina Issakova. Their head movements were not as neat as those of the Royal Ballet's cygnets at their best, and their foot-movements were no better than those of artists like Maryon Lane and Merle Park ; but they achieved the finest all-over standard I have ever seen.

The biggest surprise of this production was the competent conducting of Vadim Kalentiev. From the first bars of the overture it was clear that he felt at home with Tchaikovsky's passionate romanticism, and throughout the ballet he set tempi which were suited to the choreography and the needs of the dancers, without falling into an unmusical eclecticism. Even if he did not achieve the poetic ecstacy which the greatest conductors can find in Tchaikovsky's soaring melodies, he never lapsed into total banality (as he did at times in his conducting for *Giselle*) and one could sense a real interplay between him and the dancers.

GALA PROGRAMME

THIS programme of excerpts from ballets, pas de deux, etc. began on July 4 with a real museum piece—a long scene from *Bayaderka*, a shortened version of the Petipa ballet *La Bayadère*, first produced in 1877 at a time of balletic decadence. The fascinating thing about *Bayaderka* was that it was staged very much as Petipa left it. Though it had an " Indian " story, with characters called by such pseudo-Indian names as Nikiya and Solor, there was not the slightest attempt at Orientalism in choreography or music, and the only concession to the East was the hero's turban and tunic and the feather in his head-band. The music showed Minkus at his most mechanical, and the steps given to the soloists were suffocatingly banal ; as for the corps de ballet dancers, they moved in symmetrical evolutions with only the most simple steps, and often were spread out evenly over the entire stage. This was all of great interest to the historian—but anyone else would have been much happier to see the Kirov version of *Les Sylphides*.

Then came a scene from *Casse Noisette*. Vainonen's version of Ivanov's choreography set the Sugar-Plum Fairy dancing not just with the Prince but also with four additional partners—a stupid idea, for it broke up the pattern of one of Ivanov's most beautiful creations. But this scene included one interesting new lift : the Sugar-Plum Fairy was helped into a leap by one partner, and caught as she landed by another : Kolpakova and her partners did this very well.

In *Fantasia* (choreography by Leonide Jacobson) we were given a very welcome chance of seeing Alla Osipenko. Here was a familiar type of Soviet pas de deux in which the ballerina and her partner wear wispy, exiguous draperies of a Greek type and perform complicated lifts. Osipenko gave the rather banal movements her own type of magic, showing her wonderful sense of line whenever possible.

Jacobson's choreography for the next item, *The Snow Maiden*, was much more enterprising : in fact the movements wittily evoked a girl of snow melting away in the rays of the sun. Galina Kekisheva interpreted this role with all the individuality, charm and precision one would have expected from her adorable white cat : she was absurdly and pathetically moving as she seemed to shake drops of water off her quivering fingers.

There was something naïvely preposterous about the grand pas de deux from *The Flames of Paris*, a Soviet ballet dealing with the French Revolution, with the ballerina in a tutu decorated with coloured ribbons and the danseur noble in a modification of the conventional male classical costume that made him look like a racing cyclist. But Alexandre Pavlovsky made a novel, vivid and fascinating impression in the male variation: he was tough and extremely virile, with something of the same easy athletic assurance as the dancers in Jerome Robbins ballet *Fancy Free*.

Olga Moiseyeva danced *Le Cygne* (*The Dying Swan*) in a way which showed that she had no understanding of the classical romanticism of this dance created for, and immortalized by, Anna Pavlova. Moiseyeva exaggerated each movement to the limit, leaning her head right down to her shoulder, bending her arms at a sharp angle behind her back, and making her hands stiff with tension. Then, with almost incredible bad taste, she gave an encore—something which no dancer with any feeling for the symbolism of this dance could even consider.

GALA PROGRAMME *(continued)*

The programme ended magnificently with a scene from the Cossack ballet *Taras Bulba,* with choreography by Fenster different from that made familiar by a film of an earlier production. Here nearly all the finest male dancers of a company rich in male talent (in fact richer than in female talent) were given the chance to show their virtuosity and elan in stylized Ukrainian steps. Oleg Sokolov and Yuri Soloviev both did brilliantly as the two sons of Taras Bulba—Soloviev leaping higher than any man has done at Covent Garden for decades—and Alexandre Livshitz stopped the show with *coupés-jetés* around the stage in which he made both legs in turn rise high in front of him in a great wheeling movement that had all the marks of a new invention.

CAST CHANGES

The Sleeping Beauty

AFTER the first performance at Covent Garden on Friday 23rd June there were a number of cast changes. Xenia Ter-Stepanova, dancing the title role on the matinée of the 24th and on the 26th, proved to be a dancer with a baffling mixture of virtues and defects. Considered purely as dancing her performance was markedly superior to Kolpakova's, and in fact was very good indeed, in the purest Leningrad style. Her line was excellent, and she showed a brilliant turn of speed in all supported pirouettes. On the other hand her acting was to all intents and purposes non-existent : this did not matter very much in the Vision scene (where she gave a rather charming and unexpected impression of a girl in a trance), but it deprived the Rose Adage of all radiance and took away much of the dramatic impact of the scene where Aurora pricks her finger.

The Princess Florine (i.e. female Blue Bird) of Olga Moiseyeva was disappointing in many ways. She held her head in a stiff manner, sometimes poking it forward ; her mouth remained set in a rather unconvincing smile ; and she broke the line of her arms at the wrist—almost as if she were a Muscovite dancer of the old school (though she is in fact a Kirov graduate like the others.) Her partner Sergei Vikulov performed the difficult steps of the Blue Bird solos very well indeed, but his make-up (with very dark lips and eyes) made him look like a vamp of the silent film days.

Oleg Sokolov was splendid as Prince Desiré : he acted and partnered as well as Vladilen Semenov, and showed a cleaner pair of feet in the solos.

FINAL CAST CHANGES

It was not until the final stages of the season that the company showed its full stature with cast changes in the classics that brought forward solo danseuses worthy of its great traditions. On 7th July Natalia Makarova, as Giselle, fully lived up to the promise she had shown as the Fairy Tenderness in *The Sleeping Beauty*: this twenty-year-old dancer, after only two years in the company, gave a performance of Giselle far superior to Kolpakova's. In Act I her immaturity was clear in the way she carried her interpretation through to its logical extreme: up to the mad scene she was so childish and naïve she made Giselle seem almost half-witted, and then her madness—with a horribly fixed smile—was so convincingly pathological that it took us away from the ballet world to the world of the asylum. But she acted powerfully and danced magnificently ; and in Act II she gave a superb and almost flawless performance, with every detail falling into place.

The whole season came into focus with Osipenko's magnificent performances of Odette-Odile (12th and 13th July). Both in the " swan " acts and in Act III her unique and miraculous line (with long supple arms and legs curving upwards towards an ecstatic infinity) was seen to advantage in great choreography. Her hands were particularly remarkable in Act II, suggesting feathers by their delicate and relaxed fluttering. In Act III, her interpretation was very subtle and telling, for she made Odile copy Odette quite closely —in order to deceive the Prince—and yet showed a smile and a quality of movement that were slightly (and wonderfully) meretricious. This was not a perfect performance: every now and again one was brought down to earth by a fault of phrasing (such as when she came into a fourth position, in preparation for a pirouette, and simply waited until it was time to take off) or an unsteadiness in a supported movement or lift (for Soloviev's partnering was at times inept). But quickly she re-established her magical spell—and one forgave Soloviev for everything as soon as he launched himself into Siegfried's variation, in which he brought pure male classical dancing to a higher point than anything seen in London for at least three decades, and probably since Nijinsky.

The season ended well with two performances of *The Sleeping Beauty* with Alla Sizova in the title role. Though she was tackling this role for the first time, it suited her temperament admirably, and she did much better than her predecessors (Kolpakova and Ter-Stepanova). She did particularly well in the Rose Adage (where her balance was solid and easy) and in the variation preceding the finger-pricking—where the big, bounding steps gave good opportunities to her exceptional elevation and lightness. Oleg Sokolov partnered her superbly, looking graceful, noble and manly.

In fact the last eight days were glorious, leaving only two serious regrets: one for the long delay in showing the classics with adequate ballerinas, and the other for the two new ballets which the company was taking to New York but which their English impresario mistakenly advised them not to show in London.

BALLETS MINERVA

FOR seven years the Ballets Minerva, directed by Edward Gaillard, has been touring this country—usually playing in small theatres, town halls, etc., in places where ballet is rarely or never seen. On 9th June they were invited by Nesta Brooking to give a performance in Hampstead, in the Brooking studio—a performance which fitted in happily with the Hampstead Festival of the Arts, though not an official part of it.

What stood out from the rise of the curtain on the first ballet was the professionalism of the dancers. They knew very well how to take possession of the stage and make contact with the audience ; their costumes were elegant, fresh and beautifully made ; and on one occasion, when a dancer fell—something which can happen to anyone, on any stage—she covered up with admirable presence of mind, extending a leg in a developpé from a sitting position.

The ballets shown (only a small part of an extensive repertoire) suggested that the company is very much better in comedy than in " straight " classical dancing. In fact the best item was a comedy ballet recently added to the repertoire, *The Ugly Duckling* (with choreography by Edward Gaillard). This was graced by a fine performance in the title role by Suzanne Sarova, a small girl with a piquant face, a fine sense of humour and a crisp soubrettish line; she got everything possible out of the movements allotted to her. Margaret Cameron was cool and elegant as the Swan, treating the role as a close relative to Odette ; and Harold Foster gave Old Mother Duck the full treatment, making her an outright Panto Dame. *Diana's Mythtake* began feebly as a pastiche of *Gala Performance*, but improved a good deal when it began to incorporate gags of the sort used by the Crazy Gang: I particularly liked the moment when Diana flung her bow offstage, with a familiar balletic flourish—and it produced a thunderous crash in the wings.

TANI MORENA AND HER PUPILS

ON 24th June Tani Morena presented a performance of Spanish dances at the " Polish Hearth ", in which (in contrast to the previous show) she appeared as well as her pupils. This Armenian dancer and teacher has a striking Oriental face which has been familiar for some time from advertisements, and it was interesting at long last to see her performing in public. Her pupils showed some real progress since the last show, and in fact the most successful item was the finale—a Sevillanas in four *coplas,* danced by three couples. There was not quite enough room for three couples on the tiny stage, and perhaps it would have been better to show each *copla* performed by a single couple. A small but interesting Flamenco pas de deux was performed by two promising pupils, José Nuri (from Turkey) and Maria Lumkong (from Trinidad): both have already the characteristic " look " of Flamenco dancers, and their hand movements are good.

The most striking aspect of the show was the decor, designed by Jeremy Eldridge, now studying at the Royal College of Art. He combined a number of elements into an elegant and harmonious stage picture: cleverly placed spots directed on to sweeping curves of fish-netting above the stage cast strange shadows on the cyclorama, in front of which were placed admirable abstract shapes—one of which showed a round transparent hole when the lighting changed.

Fernau Hall's reviews of Ballet Rambert and Festival Ballet appear on pages 10/11 this issue

Held over until next issue
The Jerome Robbins season
The Masque Ballet Club performance 22nd July

Oleg Kerensky's review of the Hintlesham Festival

INTERVIEW WITH KONSTANTIN SERGEYEV

by

JANET and LEO KERSLEY

with

acknowledgments to *Nina Hubbard* who kindly acted as interpreter throughout this series of articles.

Konstantin Sergeyev (centre) with Gridin, Osipenko, Sizova and Soloviev
Photo : Ian James

THE name of Konstantin Sergeyev is one which comes to us echoing with the distant ring of a previous generation of Soviet dancers, contemporary as he is with Yermolaev and Preobrajensky, and all partners of Galina Ulanova in her Leningrad days. It came as a slight shock, therefore, when the man who opened the door of Room 177 at the Strand Palace Hotel—a man of medium height, with a full head of curly black hair and an almost unlined face, whose age one would have guessed to be in the very early forties—introduced himself to us as Sergeyev. It was immediately obvious that he was a dancer, for he sat, relaxed yet perfectly controlled, in his chair in exactly the manner of most great male dancers who have carried their dancing career on into their forties and fifties and which we first noticed in Leonide Massine, sitting like a statue at the Opera House, Covent Garden at a concert in the 'thirties. Sergeyev appeared equally impassive until the conversation progressed and he found himself interested. Then he became animated, sat on the edge of his chair, laughing, following the course of the conversation into and out of Russian and back again and gesticulating freely yet calmly with short, strong, capable hands.

After a short time with the touring company of Mathilde Kschessinska's brother, Joseph Kschessinsky, Sergeyev studied at the Maryinsky School and joined the company in 1930, partnering Ulanova and other ballerinas and dancing the leading roles in *Swan Lake, Romeo and Juliet* and many other well-known roles. Now, while still the company's leading male dancer, he is their chief choreographer and *maître de ballet*. As the man ultimately responsible for the artistic direction of the company, our first question to him dealt with the vexed point of alterations in the choreography of the old classics. It seems to London audiences that *Giselle* has been left untouched, while *Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake* have been considerably altered —so far as one can tell from the productions of the other Sergueeff (Nicholas) for the Vic-Wells/Sadler's Wells Ballet and the International Ballet. Was this due, we asked, to the fact that *Giselle* was a foreign work, premièred in Paris and afterwards imported, and therefore left unchanged, whereas the Petipa ballets were Russian ballets and therefore the company which originally mounted them felt justified in making alterations ?

On this point Sergeyev's reply was unconditional. " We have altered the mime scenes " he told us " because the audiences felt that these scenes were dead. They had absolutely no interest for the audience any more. The dancing scenes and steps we do not alter."

This raises an interesting point which should be dealt with here, in view of this statement, made by the person responsible for the choreography of these ballets, and for the reinstatement of the Petipa versions after the ballets had been completely altered in post-Revolution days. (Incidentally, when Nicholas Sergueeff first reproduced these classic ballets it was fashionable to comment that he could not read his notation, could not remember, and made up what he had forgotten. Only since we have seen *Giselle* by the Bolshoi, almost step for step what Nicholas Sergueeff reproduced, has he been given the credit for authenticity which he obviously deserved !) At the time when Nicholas Sergueeff reproduced *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty* for the Vic-Wells Company, there were few dancers available capable of executing correctly—let alone with ease—even some of the *corps de ballet* work shown by the Kirov this season: who can tell at this point whether the versions familiar to us from the Royal Ballet productions are authentic, or had had to be simplified by Nicholas Sergueeff, cutting his coat according to his cloth in 1934 and 1939 ? Or is it probable that the Kirov versions—mostly more complex combinations of steps with which we are familiar—are correct ? Who among the Sadler's Wells dancers of 1939 could have touched one of these Kirov Fairies' variations ? And is it likely that the English dancers, with a scant decade of training behind them, could reproduce the " Petipa style " more correctly than can these Russians ?

There is no question about the authenticity of *Giselle*, however ; but there is a considerable difference in interpretation, first noticed in the performance of Fadeyechev in 1956 and followed now by that of Semyonov, as Albrecht. As commonly performed in the West, Albrecht is the hero of the ballet, Hilarion (or Hans, or the Woodcutter) the moustache-twirling heavy villain. The Russians take a different view of the role ; indeed the moral positions of these two characters are reversed. Sergeyev explained that this is a long tradition in Soviet ballet, " since " he said " we feel that Albrecht is a cad: that he is seducing Giselle, knowing he can never marry her ; and realising only when she is dead and it is too late that he loved her all the time." He was interested to hear that we had deduced exactly this interpretation of the role from Fadeyechev's portrayal in 1956, and also that we had been intrigued to discover whether this was a personal interpretation, or—as is in fact the truth—a Soviet tradition. Sergeyev is himself one of Russia's most famous Albrechts and he danced the role to Nerina's Giselle when she visited Leningrad recently. About Nerina he had no reservations at all. " She was magnificent,"

he told us, "one of the finest dancers I have partnered. Do you know, we only had one rehearsal together: one single rehearsal! Yet immediately, immediately without a spoken word in common, we understood one another. It was a pleasure to dance with someone who lost herself in the role so completely and played so sympathetically and understandingly towards me, her partner."

The public likes *Giselle*, he told us, as it is: so *Giselle* remains, mime scenes and all, untouched; and it is true that there is very little conventional mime of the "deaf-and-dumb language" type in *Giselle*. Pure dancing works, too, like *Les Sylphides* or the Shadows scene from *Bayarderka* remain unchanged, although, he told us, there is no official system of notation in use; ballets are remembered and handed down; individual choreographers use their own notation, "but," he added with a laugh, "nobody else can read it!" This led us on to the debated point of whether Soviet Russia had, or had not, in fact seen Fokine's *Petrouchka* and Sergeyev was able to clear this up for us finally. "Fokine did not mount it for us himself," he said, "but Benois, and Leontiev (Fokine's original Harlequin) who had worked with Fokine in that ballet, did so."

On questions of technique, on the famous *épaulement* of his dancers, their perfectionism and their insistence upon keeping within the picture and not "dancing to the gallery", Sergeyev gave the entire credit to the teacher Vaganova. All the older dancers and choreographers came strongly beneath her influence, and it is to her teaching and her system, still taught by her pupils, that the purity of execution and smooth ease of technique is due.

We had heard from various sources that the reason why the Shostakowitz ballet and other announced works had not in fact been performed was owing to lack of rehearsal time, the orchestra having exhausted their quota of hours on other ballets given previously. It was obvious that Sergeyev regretted the omission of these works quite as much as did the audience. "We wanted to show these ballets very much, and had everything necessary with us. However, through no fault of ours this proved impossible." We followed this up by enquiring whether there had been anything in the response of the London audience which had taken the company by surprise. "Oh, yes," he replied, "we expected that the 'phlegmatic English' would clap politely a couple of times at curtain-fall. Instead you have overwhelmed us by the warmth of your response."

At this point Sergeyev was called to rehearsal—indeed, he was already nearly an hour late—so with regret we had to let him go. Our last glimpse of him came outside the Stage Door after the closing performance, when we gave him our precious copy of Fokine's Memoirs, in which he had expressed great interest when we first met: indeed, he told us that Vitale Fokine had recently sent to him a great mass of Fokine's notes and memoranda. "Come back!" we asked him. "Please come back soon!" His only answer was an enigmatic smile. Let us hope that the rumour that the Kirov Ballet return in 1963 is true, and London audiences will then see what must be one of the most fascinating performances of the role of Albrecht—that of Konstantin Sergeyev.

THE RAMBERT SEASON

June Sandbrook as The Sleepwalker and Norman Morrice as The Poet in Balanchine's Night Shadow

THE novelty in the opening programme of the Ballet Rambert's season at Sadler's Wells (beginning 18th July) was a production of the Balanchine Ballet *Night Shadow*, staged by John Taras: this was the first time this ballet (made familiar by a number of visiting companies) has been performed by a British company.

In general the Rambert production compared quite well with its predecessors, and in its costumes and settings it was the most successful yet. Alix Stone resisted the temptation to attempt something daringly new—rightly so, for the melodramatic action tends to seem ludicrous when not allied to bel canto singing of Bellini's heavenly melodies, and anything outré in costumes and setting would push the ballet over the edge. (As it was, I heard some irreverent giggles when the poet, running out of ideas for manoevring the sleepwalker, lay on the ground and held up his hand for her to step over.) The costumes, in particular, looked flowing and romantic in the soft lighting. The first scene of this ballet is extremely conventional, with its ball, its divertissements and its intrigue between coquette and poet: one imagines Balanchine to have knocked it together in a hurry and then never bothered to change it, knowing that that ballet owes it appeal to the ingenious pas de deux of sleepwalker and poet. In fact everything depends on the sleepwalker, who must be a classical ballerina with great magnetism a feeling for the supernatural and a superb bourrée on point: June Sandbrook has some excellent qualities, but she was miscast in this role, being unable to cast any magical spell. Norman Morrice seemed an even odder choice for the Poet, since in previous seasons he has shown a certain gawkiness which unfitted him for noble classical rôles; in fact, however he did quite well, moving with grace and looking adequately dignified.

The most important thing about the production on 20th July of *Night and Silence* (first produced by Walter Gore for the Edinburgh Festival in 1958) was that it gave us a chance to see Paula Hinton once again. This great artist, once a leading light of the Ballet Rambert, has spent many years on the continent, and to see her once again with the Rambert (as guest artist) brought back glowing memories. But one would have preferred to see her in something offering her more opportunities than *Night and Silence*, the latest in a series of works in which Walter Gore has explored the passions and scenes of jealousy involved in a triangular situation (a situation which clearly obsesses him). Understandably anxious to give a new twist to his treatment of this situation, Walter Gore took an idea from Roland Petit's ballet *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort* and set his rather sordid story (with an attempted strangling) against some of Bach's noblest music, including the D minor toccata; he also made his ballet into a pas de deux of extraordinary length (over 20 minutes), putting great strain on the ballerina—who is in action almost continuously.

In fact Paula Hinton danced like a passionate angel, giving no sign of strain, pouring any amount of subtlety and dynamic variation into her rôle, and succeeding to a good extent (as no one else could) in disguising the weaknesses of the choreography. The basic trouble with

Continued at foot of column 1 next page

THE SNOW MAIDEN

THIS ballet, first shown in full by the Festival Ballet at the Royal Festival Hall on 17th July (after a "pre-view" of the first two acts at the Florence Festival) was of special interest as the first ballet to be created for a British company by a team of Soviet artists; what is more, it was shown in London immediately after the Kirov season, and so offered an intriguing contrast with Soviet choreography performed by Soviet dancers.

What stood out most of all in *The Snow Maiden* was the success of Vladimir Bourmeister as a producer: it was obvious that this choreographer (well known in the Soviet Union for his work with the Stanislavsky Theatre Ballet in Moscow—a company quite independent of the Bolshoi) had found ways of getting British dancers to understand what he wanted, and had worked with them very carefully and patiently. The corps de ballet, for example, brought a disciplined enthusiasm to their work which was at times quite refreshing: on the whole they lacked the slender elegance of the Kirov corps de ballet, and their jumps were by no means so impressive, but a number of the danseurs and danseuses were given opportunities from time to time for effective cameos of movement, alone or in small groups, and took these with plenty of zest.

The same was true of the principals. Vassilie Trunoff was outstanding as Vassilie, dancing better than ever before, and showing himself to have magnificent command of Russian and Ukrainian steps. As the "leading village dancer" he had nothing much to do with the story, but the ballet would not have been the same without him, and he succeeded in making a fresh and vivid impact even after *Taras Bulba*, seen shortly before at Covent Garden.

Belinda Wright was charming and demure as the Snow Maiden, and looked prettier than ever before in her elegant headdress (which suited very well the shape of her face); she did not bring out the crystalline brilliance one might expect in a

Continued in next column

BALLET RAMBERT—

Continued from page 10

Walter Gore as a choreographer is that he is sensitive to rhythm but not to any other aspects of music, and as a result his ballets exist only from moment to moment, without any expressive build-up of phrasing; in *Night and Silence* this musical insensitivity led him over and over again to set romantically (even hysterically) violent gestures against accents of the Bach music in a way which made complete nonsense of what Bach was saying.

But who can resist Paula Hinton in a passionate rôle? She has continued to mature in her years on the continent and now dances better—and looks more beautiful—than ever before: her expressive mask of a face, with finely modelled cheekbones, haunts the imagination long after the curtain has fallen.

The remainder of the Rambert season will be reviewed in our next issue

Snow Maiden—as Kekisheva did so well in the solo in *Gala Performance*—but the choreography did not give her the same opportunities as did Jacobson's for Kekisheva. In the almost equally important rôle of Kupava, Marilyn Burr—decorated with a gorgeous white fur hat—looked radiant (though slightly too sophisticated for a village maiden), and achieved more dramatic feeling than in her previous rôles. Oleg Briansky was splendidly right as the peasant Mizgir; though (almost inevitably) his dancing looked somewhat heavy compared with Soloviev's in *The Stone Flower*, he looked and acted as a proper fairy-tale hero: tall, sturdy and brave, with a neat beard that gave him an admirable touch of exoticism.

Unfortunately the success of the ballet as a whole was affected by deficiences in the general planning and in the detail of the choreography: clearly Bourmeister has more talent as a producer than as a choreographer. His chief mistake was to make the ballet too long. There was very little action in Act I, and what there was—the Snow Maiden playing with snowflakes and arguing with Father Frost—was duplicated in Act II. Even in Act II the action was somewhat desultory: the ballet as a whole did not really get under way until Act III, with its lively Russian dances. In the Soviet Union the multi-act ballet lasting a whole evening is the normal thing (one-acters being very rare) and it was natural enough for Bourmeister to think in these terms; but even the most complex ballet theme can be treated in two acts; and *The Snow Maiden* would have made a much better impression as an expansion of the present Act III.

Generally speaking Bourmeister used a style very close to that of Petipa: there was almost nothing to suggest that the ballet had been choreographed in the twentieth century. It had the merit of being closely fitted to the music: clearly Bourmeister studied the score carefully before setting any of it. In composing classical dances he was uninventive, but he showed a real flair for character dancing in Act III.

It was an extraordinary experience to listen to unfamiliar Tchaikovsky music, much of it so danceable that one would swear it had been written for ballet in the first place: this was particularly true of the strongly rhythmic Russian dances. Being written as incidental music for Ostrovsky's *Snow Maiden* (apart from Act I, for which Bourmeister used part of Tchaikovsky's first symphony) it fitted the action admirably, and there was a fine horn tune which showed Tchaikovsky in a very characteristic mood of nostalgic sadness.

Just as in most of the Kirov productions, there was a very marked contrast in quality between the settings and the costumes. In dressing the various characters the designers Yuri Pimenov and Gennady Epishin showed a good feeling for the type of cut and the texture of materials capable of showing dancing to good advantage, and in the men's costumes for the village junketing in Act III they proved themselves capable of a slightly crazy fantasy—something quite right in a fairy tale. One missed the bold, obstreperous colours that Larionov or Goncharova might have used, but it looked as if the Soviet designers had some knowledge of the pioneer work of their two great predecessors—and perhaps even of some costume designs by Picasso for *Parade*. The settings, in contrast, were drab and heavy-handed: admittedly the stage of the Festival Hall (with its odd shape and its tiers at the back) offers great problems to the designer, but other artists working for the Festival Ballet have used it effectively. It was particularly depressing to have to look for three acts at the wooden tiers covered in a most unenterprising way with lengths of material.

THE performance on 21st July showed a number of changes in the principal rôles. In fact Irina Borowska's interpretation of the title rôle was so different from Belinda Wright's that one wondered what Bourmeister really had in mind. Only to a very limited extent was Borowska's Snow Maiden sweet or demure: she projected a rather imperious and sophisticated creature. This ballerina, born of Polish parents in Argentina, showed certain disturbing faults in her classical style in particular a stiff back and inadequate épaulement—and it was clear that the rôle did not suit her very well. She showed a gift for characterisation in the scene where the Snow Maiden demands that Mizgir should dance with her, and we may hope that this talent will find a more suitable outlet later in other rôles.

The other guest artist, Michael Maule, was also rather miscast: this witty, intelligent and highly gifted dancer (of South African origin, but now an American citizen) made a very striking impression as one of the leading male dancers in the Jerome Robbins company at its last visit, and one would have liked to see him in a rôle making more demands on his varied talents.

Deirdre O'Conaire celebrated her promotion to ballerina by giving a superb performance as Kupava. Her classical style was very close to that of the best of the Kirov dancers: in fact one could well imagine her as a Kirov ballerina alongside such artists as Osipenko and Sizova. What stood out most of all was the way in which she translated the feelings of Kupava, not only in her facial expressions and in the line of her body, but also in her phrasing: in her big solo of despair, for example, she made certain poses sing out by coming to them in a sharp, staccato manner, projecting very clearly Kupava's agony of spirit. In fact she established this rôle as containing the best choreography in the whole ballet.

Among the other roles, Jelko Yuresha contributed a graceful, supple and elegant performance as Leil: he caught exactly the freshness and spontaneity of a certain type of Russian peasant youth, made familiar by great Russian films such as the *Maxim* Trilogy.

FERNAU HALL

Festival Ballet reviews to be continued next month

Florence Teatro Communale, 22nd June, 1961.

FIRST PERFORMANCE IN THE WESTERN WORLD OF

THE SNOW MAIDEN

by

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET

MUSIC BY TCHAIKOVSKY CHOREOGRAPHY AND PRODUCTION BY VLADIMIR BOURMEISTER

Snow Maiden, Snow Maiden, now list to my lay :
Ne'er stray from the forest come dawn of the day ;
But dance with the snow-flakes, stay near Father Frost,
And face not the Sun, or thou surely art lost.

But the Snow Maiden heeds not the warning so clear,
And hies to the township to search for Mizgir ;
Who marries her 'spite poor Kupava's dismay,
And knows not the price that he'll soon have to pay.

For scarce had the feasting and dancing begun,
When, fierce in his might, uprose the great Sun :
Poor little Snow Maiden swift melted away,
And Mizgir sought Death on that same grievous day.

WELL, that is Ostrovsky's story in a few words. I hope I may be forgiven for breaking into verse, the fact is I was so moved by this wonderful ballet and so enthralled by its magic, that at its close I really felt I had been participating in it ; and mere prose did not seem sufficient to get readers into the required mood for what I want to say. In the little poem I have tried to convey the terriffic change of mood that occurs in this ballet : what started off so lightly becoming gradually more and more dramatic until the final, terrible dénouement is reached.

Tchaikovsky originally wrote the music as far back as 1873 and earlier (some of it is from his first symphony), and merely as incidental music to Ostrovsky's play. For years the music lay shelved and forgotten in the Bolshoi archives until Vladimir Bourmeister grasped its possibilities for a ballet, and by his genius achieved the wonderful work that has just had its first performance (in the Western World). I should add that for the Florence performances the first act was condensed into a prologue, certain parts of this act not being ready for performance.

Much of the music has the true Russian flavour without the Western characteristics that occur in so much of Tchaikovsky's later work. And this makes it perfect for this essentially folk-ballet, Russian through and through, with all the tenderness, sadness, sudden bursts of wild gaiety and abandon that characterise Russian folk stories. The harmonies often convey a dark colour as of warning, intermingled with simple harmonies supporting an equally simple folk me'ody that only a Russian could write. Therein, I think, lies the foundation of the ballet's charm, which Bourmeister so fully realised.

Bourmeister's choreography can be divided into two well contrasted sections : firstly, dance and danced mime based on the customary classical steps and five positions ; and secondly, traditional Russian folk-dancing for the villagers' and jesters' dances. These dances are simply magnificent, brimful of variety, a riot of colour with the dance-images constantly changing. The sustained vigour of movement is not surpassed even by the warriors' dances in *Prince Igor*: practically every dancer is given a short solo, each different from that preceding, thus the personality of each dancer is fully exploited, and the element of surprise is always to the fore.

Bourmeister is not so successful in his creation of the principal male rôle, Mizgir. Here the choreography resolves itself into tender mimed episodes alternating with runs and leaps round the stage that are always in the same direction and without variety of enchaînement. This tends to become rather monotonous. On the other hand the choreography for the two girls (Kupava and Snow Maiden) is carefully worked out and contrasted, Kupava dancing in the classical style with a touch of bravura, whilst the Snow Maiden's steps are based on pas de bourrée conductive to a certain mysterious, fairy-like mood. I was particularly impressed by some slow turns for the Snow Maiden in the last scene : these might be termed attitude en tournant en dehors ; they actually consist of three or four fouettés made slowly and with the whipping movement almost entirely concealed ; thus the turns seemed to be made magically, without volition.

As a result of Berlinda Wright's illness and Dianne Richards straining her leg the rôle of the Snow Maiden passed suddenly to Gaye Fulton. It might have been made for her. So magical was her performance that although she remained always within the kingdom of make-belief, creating a character purely of the imagination, the pathos of her acting was such that at the end the audience was in a state not very far removed from tears, and myself quite overcome.

To stress the Snow Maiden's unreality Gaye Fulton portrayed her as though she were almost a puppet : the little steps, the little jerky head and fore-arm movements, on pointe practically always, convinced us this was no human being. Yet was the maiden so sweet, so capricious, and finally so pathetic, that she moved us just as much as Giselle or Odette ever could. And that means, surely, that Gaye Fulton's performance was perfectly ideal, a creation of genius.

As Kupava, the jilted lover, Marilyn Burr was also excellent. The gradual change from the care-free young peasant girl to the broken hearted victim of Mizgir's change of heart was most beautifully portrayed, and danced with the utmost sincerity and passion ; indeed, her final dance of desperate despair culminating in her collapse and slow withdrawal from the scene was one of the most heartrending moments of the ballet.

Oleg Briansky as Mizgir, the young lover of both girls, acted extremely well, his gestures always being significant and without exaggeration. He has a fine sense of the dramatic, and his final gestures of abnegation prior to his leap to death carried conviction by their extreme sincerity, and by his ability to express grief. I think he might have worn a more attractive costume for his wedding, and his ragged scanty beard detracted from his looks and made him look too old.

Coming to the minor rôles, Vassilie Trunoff and Diane Westerman were

Robert Paterson dedicates his poem to Gaye Fulton for whom he wrote it on the morning after the performance in Florence

splendid as leaders of the village folk-dancing. They partnered each other ideally and presented a variety of steps with the utmost verve and gaiety. Trunoff's leaps were quite outstanding.

The same goes for Ronald Emblen as leader of the jesters ; he was simply amazing in his leaps and contortions. But so were all the other lads who threw him about, jerked him up and down, but who never quenched him for an instant. Emblen also did an unusual bit of leapfrogging, jumping high over the stoopers without touching them. I was immensely impressed by the versatility and character displayed by each and every jester ; they, with Trunoff and Westerman, were the backbone of this part of the ballet.

It was difficult on account of the subdued lighting in the prologue to pick out the snow-flakes individually. But I caught sight of one charming young person, Janet Kedge, who danced divinely, and whose transformation from the old school-mistress in *Graduation Ball* into a lovely, lissom snow-flake, constitutes a major coup de théâtre ! Jeanette Minty, Jennifer Alderton, and Joan Potter were also in this group, and all acquitted themselves admirably.

Peter White and John Auld were good as the two old men—Father Frost and King Berendej. But the latter looked a little too apostolic for my liking, although his costume was probably traditional.

I have seldom if ever seen more attractive décors and costumes. These were designed by Yuri Piminov and Gennady Epishin, painted by Edward Delany, and executed by E. Babbage & Co. The costumes were executed by Mme Lilyne.

A semi-permanent set is used which at first represents the forest and later the vicinity of the village—with snow slides to either side, and a most beautiful backdrop of the winding river seen from a height through a spinney of silver birches. The effect is very soft in the forest scene, where the river is not seen ; one can almost feel the snow falling. And a very bright and characteristically Russian atmosphere is obtained later in the village scene, making a superb contrast.

The Snow Maiden's costume is naturally all white, sprinkled with crystal icicles over the bodice and long tutu, and a most beautiful Russian headress of wired crystals through which the hair is seen. The little fur trimmed pelisses worn by the girls of the village are also most attractive in their varied colours, and the villagers and jesters costumes are all different, varicoloured, yet blending perfectly. A riot of colour if ever there was one.

The orchestra of the Teatro Communale responded nobly to Geoffrey Corbett's vigorous demands, and some lovely playing was specially noticeable from the lower strings, horns, and lower woodwind. The sudden outbursts from the brass were never strident, as so often happens in Italian orchestras, and the percussion was also well under control.

The Snow Maiden ballet was preceded by a very successful performance of a completely new version of Act 2 of Swan Lake, choreographed by Vladimir Bourmeister, and presented against a black background. But of this I have no space to write.

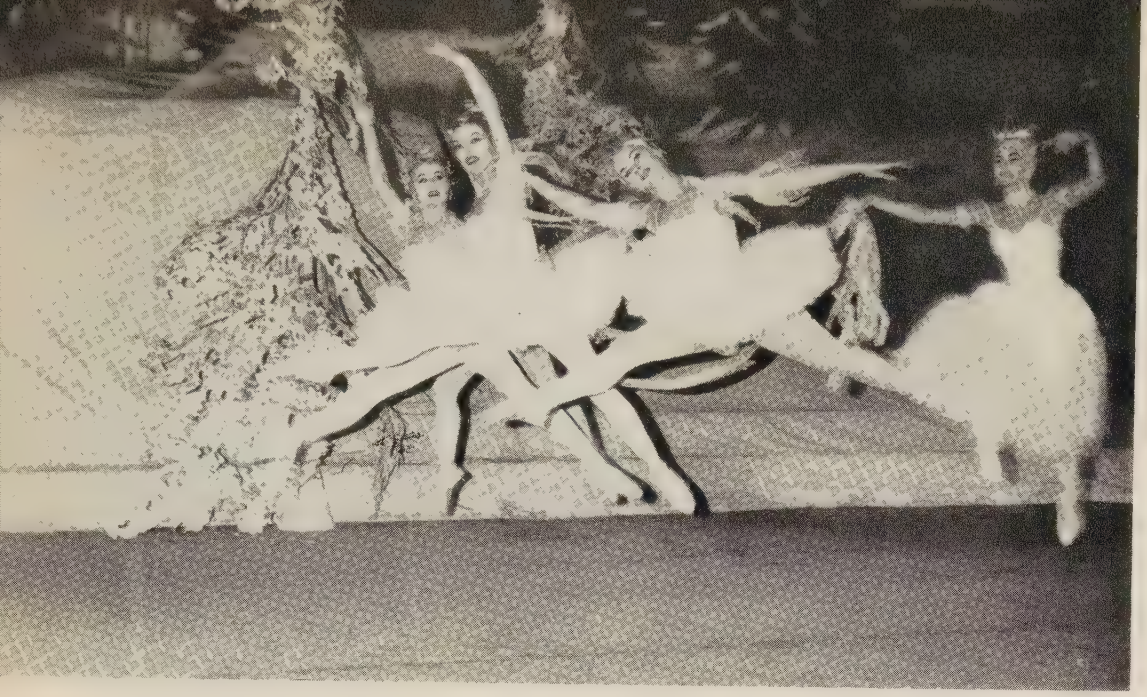
Once again I must give grateful thanks to Dottore Mario Porcile for securing me excellent seats at both performances.

ROBERT PATERSON

THE FIRST SNOW MAIDEN

Gaye Fulton - with Peter White as Father Frost

Photo taken in Florence by Mike Davis



Snow Maiden
Belinda Wright

Snowflakes
Jeannette Minty
Diane Westerman
Janet Kedge
Gillian Shane

The Snow Maiden plays with the snowflakes, pretending to ride with them on a troika

THE SNOW MAIDEN

REHEARSAL PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN IN LONDON BY IAN JAMES

Below :
Oleg Briansky as Mizgir
Marilyn Burr as Kupava

IN THE great dark wood lives Father Frost and his daughter the Snow Maiden. At first she is happy in the forest where the wind blows so cold and the snow falls all the time, because she herself is made of snow. But one evening whilst playing with her snowflakes the Snow Maiden sees Mizgir and Kupava flirting. This is the first time the Snow Maiden has seen human love, and she too wants to be caressed. She decides to leave her home in the forest to live in the village with the humans.

The Snow Maiden is happy in the forest until she sees Mizgir flirting with Kupava and falls in love with him

The Jesters
First jester Ronald Emblen (aloft)
Hendrik Davel
Desmond Kelly
Gale Law
Alan Woodward

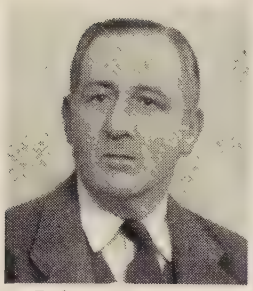
Left : Vassilie and his sweetheart
(Vassilie Trunoff and Joan Potter)

...py Vassilie and his ...art, the villagers teach ...w Maiden their songs ...ces, encouraging her to ...their merrymaking by ...higher and higher, the ...g jesters throwing each ...to the air.

...anted with her new-found ...ss, and love for Mizgir, ...w Maiden does not ...until it is too late that ... is coming out. Unable ... her beloved, she melts

the dancing world

as reported by



Robert Paterson
from Florence
page 12

Inge Zürner
from Munich
page 20

In this issue we introduce Miss Ann Barzel, noted American critic, to our readers

Mary Kenwood
from South Africa
Page 18

Ferdinand Reyna
from Paris
page 19

Jack Anderson
from San Francisco
opposite page

DANCE IN CHICAGO by ANN BARZEL

THE Chicago Opera Ballet recently completed a tour of some 90 cities and is currently dancing in Kansas in a pageant celebrating the centenary of that neighbouring state.

There may be some confusion as to Chicago's ballet company. It is a group of some 30 dancers directed by Ruth Page. The company usually assembles in September for its first rehearsal period and functions for ten weeks as part of Chicago's Lyric Opera, dancing in such operas as require ballet. Kenneth Johnson, Patricia Klekovic, Jane Bockman, Orrin Kayan, Charles Schick and Larry Long were the soloists this year. There often are guest stars. The past season Irina Borowska danced in *Aida* and Nila Amparo and Luis Olivares in *Carmen.*

After the opera season there was a four week holiday, then the company, as is its wont, went on a cross-country tour in its distinctive repertoire. The group then goes under the title of Chicago Opera Ballet. The "opera" in the name refers to the repertoire as well as to its home base activity.

Most of the works danced are ballet versions of operas—*Revenge* (Il Trovatore), *Carmen, Camille* (Traviata), *Suzanna and the Barber* (Barber of Seville), *Merry Widow* and *Die Fledermaus.* The company also presents two pas de trois, Skibine's *Idylle* and Miss Page's *Three's a Crowd.* The last named and *Die Fledermaus* were new this season.

Three's a Crowd is set to a jazz score composed for Miss Page by Marius Constant. Unlike the jazz ballets New York City Ballet and Ballet Theatre introduced later in the year, this one features neither tortured acrobatics nor tortured souls. The choreography is built on the danse d'école embellished with inventions, more often gay than audacious. The situation is a triangle, two boys and a girl, and the normal problems such a line-up provokes. It is a technically demanding pas de trois and was danced superbly by the three most talented members of the company Patricia Klekovic, Kenneth Johnson and Orrin Kayan.

For *Die Fledermaus* the Strauss score and story were arranged most aptly for dance. Miss Page has a highly developed sense of theatre, and she has made a worthy ballet of the comedy of flirtations and deceptions. Episodes before the curtain link the several scenes and help maintain the pace of the piece as well as contributing to its clarity. The dancing is very showy, worthy of the skilled dancers it was entrusted to. The sets and costumes by André Delfau are elaborate and with a tongue-in-cheek humour that appreciates the period and does not really lampoon it.

The title role was danced by Milorad Miskovitch with just the flamboyance called for. Sonia Arova of the steel-strong technique and continental airs scored as Rosalinda. Yvonne Meyer, a South American who danced in Massine's ballets last year, was most attractive as the maid Adele, and Orrin Kayan made the valet an interesting devil. Charles Schick and Larry Long created interest in supporting roles.

A mainstay of the tour was *Camille,* Miss Page's finest work. Maria Tallchief danced the title role the first week and later it was taken over by Melissa Hayden who had danced it last year. Miss Tallchief, known heretofore for abstract classical dance, this season has demonstrated a strong dramatic line both in *Camille* and in the Birgit Cullberg ballets with Ballet Theatre. Actually, those of us who have been watching her since she was introduced by Bronislava Nijinska to Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo always expected her to develop as a dramatic dancer. In fact, that fierce attack she often made on classical steps as she made her first impact on the public may have been her intrinsic leaning to drama. If the dance said nothing, she dramatized the steps. Miss Tallchief was a moving Camille. The role of Armand was danced by Kenneth Johnson, an excellent dancer and one of the best partners in ballet. Long before the curtain lifted to show us Soviet dancers hoisting ballerinas overhead at arm's length, Johnson had been using such lifts with a succession of partners. The role of the father was done with great perception by Bentley Stone. The Chicago Opera Ballet tours with an orchestra conducted by Neal Kayan, a young musician also active as a ballet composer.

Continued at foot next page

SAN FRANCISCO

by JACK ANDERSON

PACIFIC Ballet's first full scale San Francisco performances on May 26 and 27 revealed that this new group has gone far since its tentative debut several months ago. The company danced well, audiences were enthusiastic, and demand for tickets prompted a special repeat performance a week later. Alan Howard, in addition to being company director, did some spectacular dancing of his own in two classic pas de deux, demonstrating that he has freed himself from the mannerisms which marred his work when he was premier danseur of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.

Repertoire included a pleasant abstraction by Jack Johannes to Britten's *Simple Symphony* and five ballets by the company's resident choreographer, Marc Wilde. This young man may well be Pacific Ballet's greatest asset.

Not all his ballets were of equal value. *Variations for Fun* was not much fun when presented earlier and it is not much better in its revised form. A classical *Pas de Huit* was set to a Milhaud score which seemed to demand far more tongue-in-cheek choreography than Wilde provided.

But in *Rounds* (David Diamond) he created an exuberant blending of classic technique and American folk dance forms. And in *Jazziana* he wittily combined jazz-flavoured dancing with—of all things!—Telemann oboe concerti, illustrating how both jazz and baroque music balance freedom with discipline.

Most impressive of Wilde's ballets was his version of Bartok's *Miraculous Mandarin*, a fine piece of dramatic choreography, weak only in establishing the precise allegorical significance of the Mandarin. But in its translation of realistic gesture and psychological motivation into dance, the ballet is very successful. Wilde once studied with Tudor. He obviously learned some valuable lessons.

The second ballet about Adam and Eve to be presented here this spring turned up at the Contemporary Dancers when J. Marks choreographed *Man and His Desire* to a Milhaud score long neglected in America.

Whereas Lew Christensen's *Original Sin* (San Francisco Ballet) placed Eden around the corner from Broadway, Marks' Eden was lushly tropical, deep in the Brazilian jungles. His ballet, unlike Christensen's, possessed a clearly defined point of view: the fall of man was the fall of the body from natural sensuality into slavery—not only the psychological slavery of repression, but, to judge from the way Adam and Eve marched like prisoners offstage, physical slavery as well.

Except for some rather ineffectual choreography for a masked ensemble suggesting both animals and participants in a tribal ritual, this is Mark's best ballet of the past two years.

The programme also included *Interlude in Dance*, a new abstraction by Marks, and his somewhat overlong and overheated version of *Streetcar Named Desire*.

The appearance of the Moiseyev Dancers was an almost total delight. Although a few of Moiseyev's dances suffer from excessive length (among them, his treatment of the *Snow Maiden* fairy tale), he nevertheless remains the choreographer who has most successfully and attractively brought folk dancing into the theatre.

THE DANCING WORLD

an international feature reporting world news in reviews and pictures

OUR CRITICS:

London	Fernau Hall
Paris	Ferdinand Reyna
New York	Hope Sheridan
Moscow	Nina Karasyova
Amsterdam	Ine Rietstap
Venice	Robert Paterson
Auckland	Keith Woods
Tokyo	C. A. Eland
San Francisco	Jack Anderson
Brisbane	Paul Moulds
Cape Town	Marina Grut
Monte Carlo	J. R. Farrington
Munich	Ingeborg Zürner
Johannesburg	Mary Kenwood
Belgrade	Milica Zajcev-Daric
Hamburg	Robin Hamilton-Webb
Chicago	Ann Barzel
Cairo	Eric de Nemes
Bonn, Cologne	Dr. Wilfried Hofmann

DANCE IN CHICAGO (continued)

THE Stone-Camryn Ballet, another distinctly Chicago dance group, is led by Bentley Stone and Walter Camryn. The dancers, trained in their school have a style characterized by a conscious avoidance of frippery and fanciness. The directors have strong and definite choreographic ideas, leaning toward Americana and intellectual concepts. The most important recent works were Camryn's *In My Landscape* to an original score by Lora Aborn and Stone's highly original version of *Les Biches*.

The first is a personal ballet, perhaps autobiographical. The symbolism is on a poetic level and rarely obscure. Young John Neumeier was outstanding both as dancer and as narrator for this ballet with words.

Les Biches retained the characters and incidents as designated in the Poulenc score and for the rest choreographer Stone was on his very imaginative own. He has a delicious sense of humour and it is a wonderful presentation of the period, too often burlesqued and rarely understood. In this ballet of the '20s the generation that wanted too much and did too much was shown as high spirited rather than half-witted. Bentley Stone's dance material is very stylish and devilishly difficult and it was danced very well indeed, especially by Dolores Lipinski a dancer of great poise and authority. Barbara Steele caricatured the hostess with sly humour.

BALLET Guild of Chicago provides a showcase for the town's creative talents and on May 26 several new ballets were given. Loretto Rozak contributed the interesting choreography for an intriguing new score by Dan Tucker in the ballet *Hopscotch*. It concerns a street-scene on a summer evening. Here a New Boy tries to break into the charmed circle of old settlers and finds the going lonely. The clannish young exclude him from the game of the day, hopscotch. It becomes a game of solitaire as at nightfall he remains alone to hop on the patterned shadows cast by the lighted shopwindows. John Widmer as the New Boy and Ellen Gimpel as a young girl were **delightful.**

The other new work was *The Gambit*, a game of love and flirtation as played in the hothouse atmosphere of a cocktail party. The choreographer was Alvin David, once of the José Limon company, and his vocabulary is that of the modern dance. Eric Braun, known for his many years with Ballet Theatre, gave a noteworthy performance technically and dramatically.

The Ballet Guild performance included a repetition of Etta Buro's *L'Arlesienne* in which Dolores Lipinski, Orrin Kayan and Larry Long turned in fine performances. An added attraction was a pas de deux from Ruth Page's *Die Fledermaus*, danced enchantingly by Patricia Klekovic and Kenneth Johnson.

ANN BARZEL

LISBON

AFTER almost four months extensive rehearsals the première of "Grupo Experimental de Ballet" was given in Oporto at Teatro S. Joáo. The programme consisted of *Suite Romantica* (Messager), *Violent Rythm* ("Rytmo Violento") (Johnny Mandel), *Divertissment* (Ibert) all with choreography by Norman Dixon, and *Pastoral* (Stravinsky) choreography Aqueda Sena. All the ballets presented achieved considerable success and the programme was praised for its intelligent approach to the necessity of developing the interest of a new and growing ballet public.

The company, subsidised by The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, have since performed in a number of provincial towns developing rapidly a discipline and unity unknown before in Portugal.

After the company's initial success Dixon was made responsible for the future artistic policy of the company and it is hoped that the official première in Lisbon will take place later in the year, when Dixon's ballet *The Cord* will be added to the repertoire, with another work by a guest choreographer.

Next month:
Trudy Goth's report from Spoleto

The Royal Ballet in the Lebanon

BELGRADE

WITH its performance of *The Fountain of Bakhchiserai* by B. V. Asafiev the Belgrade Ballet has included in its repertoire another well known ballet. This time in the excellent original choreography of Soviet choreographer R. V. Zaharov. Performed for the first time almost 30 years ago (1934) this ballet represents one of the first works in the Soviet realistic style of classical ballet, which does not regard dance as an aim in itself but as a tool for expression of thoughts, feelings and life. B. V. Asafiev's music inspired by an old romance by Gurilov, was too fragile and eclectic a background for Zaharov's choreography, which while preserving all the beauty and tradition of the Russian ballet school was far from contemporary ballet expression. Insistence on mime and a lot of scenes which are not danced, to present audiences seem old-fashioned. However, Zaharov, an excellent director, succeeded in achieving a homogeneous style. The wealth of his choreographical ideas is best shown in the mass dances in the first act in which the battle scene was really excellent. A few pallid scenes in the Harem as well as the lack of dramatic effect in the killing of Zarema are forgotten after a virile Tatar dance.

For the première and the second showing complete ensembles were trained. Both were successful. The lyric role of Princess Maria was danced at the première by Višnja Djordjević with sincerity and moments which captured the audience and left a very good impression. At the reprise the same part was danced by Liljana Dulović in a rather simplified version, but with charm. Katarina Obradović and Lidija Pilipenko danced a technically complicated part. The first accommodating her dancing temperament to the demands of the director, and the second with more soft lines but less dramatic in her performance.

Gradimir Hadžislavković and Branko Marković were excellent in what was more a pantomime than a dance, stressing Belinski's belief that the dance should represent " the transformation of a wild soul through a deep sense of love ". From the other dancers I would point out the talented Miodrag Panič (Vaclav), the charming Marjana Jagušta (Nurali). The men's ensemble was excellent in the Tatar dance, which was very favourably received by the audience.

The conductor of the orchestra was Bogdan Babić, the costumes were created by painters Mira Glišić and Miomir Denić, who were also scenographers. They did their job well accommodating themselves to the realistic conception of the performance.

MILICA ZAJCEV-DARIĆ

Yugoslav Ballet News

After the successful première of *The Fountain of Bakhchiserai* the Belgrade Ballet left for its traditional tour of International Festivals in Lozana and Wiesbaden where it participated in *Prince Igor, The Gambler, Don Quixote,* and other performances.

The Ballet from Skopje has successfully performed *Impressions* by K. Fribec, *Classical Symphony* by Prokofiev and *The Firebird* by Stravinsky in the choreography of Vera Kostić, who has shown an improvement in her interesting choreographical ideas. Especially good performances were given by Janka Anastasova, Natka Penušlinska-Mitrovska, Elica Popovska and Elpida Pakovska.

Ekov's *Abraksas* was the last première of the Sarajevo Ballet and was favourably received by Yugoslav reviewers, who specially pointed out the choreographer Franja Horvat.

Jovanka Bjegović has returned to Belgrade after a long stay abroad. She is one of the best dancers Yugoslavia has had since the war. Once again she charmed us with her adagio in *Giselle* and in *Swan Lake* her performance can only be described as magnificent.

LUISILLO IN JOHANNESBURG

WITH Spanish dancing still at the crest of the wave of popularity in South Africa, Luisillo and his Spanish Dance Theatre opened their season in Johannesburg on Tuesday 6th June. A large and enthusiastic audience gave them a rapturous welcome in spite of the coldness of a typical Johannesburg winter's night.

It was good to be back once again in His Majesty's Theatre, which for some time has been given over to the showing of films, to the loss of the theatre-going public.

The programme opened with *San Lucar De Barrameda,* an excellent vehicle for the young men of the company, which again displayed the effective use of lighting and silhouette which seem to be general in Spanish companies.

Trigales De Trebujena was a gay offering in which Luisillo and Teresa Amaya, both of whom were warmly applauded on their entry, gave displays of solo dancing which delighted everyone.

Romance Cordobes introduced Maria Vivo, whose artistry as a singer and dancer we remembered from Luisillo's last visit, and who received excellent support from Jose Granero and Miguel Galindo. Luisillo is planning to marry Maria Vivo in Johannesburg during his season here.

Gigantes Y Cabezudos was for many the most enjoyable item of the evening. Luisillo and his partner Alicia Fernandez gave the most delightful performance as the charming and quaint villagers from Calatorao, and in the final Jota the audience were tempted to get up and join in, so spontaneous and infectious was the spectacle. Indeed so vociferous and protracted was the applause that the Company obligingly gave an encore of the last part of the Jota.

Led by the tigerish and superb Teresa Amaya the intricate rhythms of the Seguiriya were woven and combined in *Homenaje A La Seguiriya.*

La Espera proved to be a rather grim essay concerning a man condemned to death. There were some impressive moments, especially in the clever use made of the gradually increasing and diminishing sound of a clock ticking, to which Luisillo performed tortuously in the confines of his prison cell. Maria Vivo as the Beloved also gave a moving performance, both in her lullaby in the earlier part of the ballet, and later when her lover was on the scaffold. However, as with Antonio's company, it is in the pure Spanish dancing that this company excels, and *Botilleria De Los Faroles* provided this in its most exciting form. An outstanding solo was performed by a young man who is not identified in the programme but who displayed an excellent sense of comedy besides brilliant technique. Teresa Amaya and Luisillo brought the audience to the pitch of enthusiasm by their combined display of fire and virtuosity at the end of the evening, and the whole company were recalled again and again.

On Friday 16th June, Luisillo's company gave their second programme. This was a far better programme all round than the first one, and included the world première of *Despedida A Los Guerreros (Farewell To The Warriors).*

The attractive *Reflejos De La Giralda,* which opened the programme, once again gave the younger members of the company a chance to display their talents, and this applied especially to the talented Pablo Canas (who it seems, was the brilliant Boot Black of the first programme).

Sierra Bermeja, a story of gypsies on a typical night in Andalusia in 1860, gave us Luisillo and Teresa Amaya in their usual magnificently fiery display, but also included two very good smaller performances by Francisco Gonzales and Miguel Galindo, one with a whip and the other a stick.

In *Luna De Sangre,* we saw a ballet without music on a sort of *Romeo and Juliet/West Side Story* theme. The spoken Spanish dialogue was naturally lost on most of the audience, but even with the excitement of the beaten rhythms and moving performances by Mario Vivo and Luisillo, this ballet was not altogether successful.

The audience, however, left no doubt as to their delight in *Rias Baixas,* which was in the same class as the popular *Giants And Big Heads.* Set in a country town at harvest time this appealing romp ended with the whole cast joining in the dancing (performed with soft shoes to the bagpipes !) with that joyous abandon which makes one long to be part of it too. Luisillo and Nuria Ranz led the cast in the finale, which was so enthusiastically received that they repeated it.

The second half of the programme commenced with *Despedida A Los Guerreros.* This was certainly, for me at least, one of the most interesting items in this Company's repertoire. It is described in the programme as " A war dance of Ruiloba, a town of Cantabria ", which originated many years before the unification of Spain " as homage to the triumphs in the battles which constantly raged in the towns ". It begins with the curtain rising on a scene showing the women " who are of strong physique ", and who will take charge of the work in the fields, bidding farewell to their warrior husbands, fathers and brothers. This dance is performed to music (by M. Sanjuan) which I found reminiscent of Warlock's *Capriol Suite.* The exceptionally good mediaeval costumes

Continued on page 20

NEWS FROM PARIS

Rudolf Nureyev the 23-year-old dancer from the Leningrad Ballet who remained in Paris when the Company left for London, seen studying the rehearsal timetable at the Champs Elysées Theatre where he made his debut in *The Sleeping Beauty*.

MAURICE BÉJART presented for the Théâtre des Nations *Divertimento* with choreography by a young dancer in the company, Belda. This ballet, showing strong influence from Jerome Robbins, was not of much interest. Also shown were *The Seven Capital Sins* (with music by Kurt Weill and choreography by Maurice Béjart, leading dancers Janine Charrat and Ursula Kubler, produced in the expressionist style of 1925) and *Bolero de Ravel* with Duska Sifnios and the corps de ballet, resembling all the other boleros we have seen. At the Palais de Chaillot Maurice Béjart later presented his older works—*Pulcinella* and *Le Sacre du Printemps*—and Janine Charrat's ballet *Jeu de Cartes*. These productions, far more interesting than those shown in the Théâtre des Nations season, were well received.

The Cuevas company presented *The Sleeping Beauty* at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées once again. At the performance which opened the new season the title role was danced in successive acts by Rosella Hightower, Nina Vyroubova and Liane Daydé. The success of this season is assured, with the swan song of the late Marquis de Cuevas.

Determinedly modern, taking rhythms and movements from German and American modern dance, the Ballets Modernes de Paris of Françoise and Dominique occupied the stage of the Théâtre Recamier for a week. Their ballets were more like a ritual than a show. There was little scenery, costumes were stylized, poses were hieratic, and the music was contemporary and most difficult. The choreographic language of Françoise and Dominique is very personal, being without concessions and without ornament.

Two new works were performed—one to the second trumpet concerto of Jolivet and the other to music by the Argentine composer Carlos Chavez. The former derived its movements from American shows, and was made an excuse for showing lines and movements.

In the ballet (or rather pas de deux) based on music by Carlos Chavez—*Le jour où la terra tremblera* (The Day when the Earth will Tremble)—a sensuality which was overflowing but pure was allied with abstract movements.

THE Experimental Dance Theatre organised by Dinah Maggie (dance critic of the newspaper "Combat") gave its annual performance on 19th June in the Comédie des Champs Elysées. Among all the works in modern style presented by different choreographers one might mention *Terre Promise* (Promised Land) by the young choreographer Karin Wachner, to music by Alex Campbell and Joan Bennet based on negro spirituals. The choreographer did well in making use of stylized Afro-American movements in a well-composed ballet. Vera Boccadoro of the Opéra, who has studied in Moscow, presented two items in good academic style.

The ballets of the Brasilian Gilberto Motta were on bold lines, in the surrealist style made familiar by his previous works. Special interest was aroused by Sarah Acquarone of Turin, who presented three items with four members of her school: Marisa Gilberti, Paolo Olivero, Carla Renaudo and Carlo Hubertone. Two were based on "Ionisations" by the famous composer Edgar Varèse, and one on "Loved, Suffer" by the Czech composer Krenek. The works of Madame Acquarone were very modern in ideas and in realisation. They are based on the decomposition of movement, taking place in a dark fog where time seems to stand still; the deformations give disturbing effects and are the result of artistic ideas, not arbitrary notions.

The Experimental Dance Theatre thus justified its existence by showing works which otherwise would never get seen.

Mme. Gilbert Cournand, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the foundation of her ballet bookshop, has brought together a fine exhibition with the theme "The marvellous in ballet decor". From a very beautiful engraving by Torelli dated 1654 right up to the models of scenery for *The Sleeping Beauty* designed by the painter Larrain, there are many examples of the work in this field, which has attracted a whole series of fine painters: Benois, Bakst, Bérard, Bouchène, Labisse, Clavé, B. Daydé, Levasseur, Torelli and Larrain.

ON Friday, 30th June when Rudolf Nureyev came on stage at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées to dance the Blue Bird with Beatriz Consuelo, he was received by hisses, cries and insults.

"Back to Moscow!" they shouted. "Traitor!"

No doubt it was hoped that the curtain would have to be lowered and so stop the show, but the interrupters were counter-attacked by the majority of spectators, who (together with the gendarmes) forced the rioters to leave.

It was impossible to hear the music, but the two artists performed their dances perfectly. When the rioters had been expelled the audience demanded an encore, which the dancers performed to tumultuous applause.

In fact the success of the Leningrad dancer has grown with each performance. His perfect noble style, his superb arm movements and his vigour combined with grace and wonderful lightness have made him seem to Parisians the ideal dancer—the discovery of the season.

In an interview given to the press Rudolf Nureyev declared that for the moment he has no intention of going to America or elsewhere. He wishes to remain in France with the de Cuevas company. As for modern ballets in which he might appear, he said that he has no desire to change his style, and that he will continue to dance in the manner in which he was trained at the Kirov: a very sound idea.

Margaret Strong de Cuevas, widow of the Marquis, has started a law-suit in New York to set aside the last will of the Marquis, dating from 11th July 1960, in which he leaves his fortune to his faithful secretary and compaion Horatio Guerrico. In any case the latter has renounced the legacy.

The Mexican Ballet Company, after its performance for the Théâtre des Nations, played for over a month at the Theatre Chaillot with very great success.

FERDINAND REYNA

Readers in France can pay for a subscription in francs—see coupon on page 24

LUISILLO—*Continued from page 18*
and heraldic symbols used in the decor helped a great deal to establish the right atmosphere. In the first part the women using tambourines in swaying and bending movements, circle the men and touch their heads in a moving gesture of submission and blessing. The second part, performed to the bigaro (big shell) and drums only, shows the warriors in a most unusual dance in which their lances and the sword of the leader are woven and interwoven, and at the climax used as a platform on which they raise their leader as a sign of victory.

Ronda Huertana once again gave full play to Luisillo's sense of comedy as the timid boy chosen by the Harvest Queen to be her companion for the Festival of the Orange Grove. This delightful item finished with a fabulous display of fast tambourine playing which brought the house down, and which, once again, the Company, with great good humour, repeated.

The evening concluded with *Ventas De Las Pinares,* the usual tavern scene which Spanish dance companies always seem to use as a finale. This was, I think, the best of its kind I have seen. Besides including a great deal of especially good dancing by various individuals apart from the superb Luisillo and Amaya, it also provided excellent opportunities for some first class comedy miming, and the applause at the end was the most enthusiastic I have ever heard in this country. No fewer than three different encores were performed by the Company who seemed as delighted with the audience as the audience was with them. Certainly Luisillo must be thrilled with his magnificent reception here. In any event he is to add a South African girl to his company before he leaves the country. She will be chosen from among the finalists in a competition sponsored jointly by *The Star* and its associated newspapers and African Theatres.

It has just been announced that Luisillo's season in Johannesburg has been extended by a week.

MARY KENWOOD

MUNICH BALLET FESTIVAL

THIS year's festival week began on June 9 at the Munich State Opera with three premières of the resident company, all three in the choreography of Heinz Rosen. *Aubade* by Francis Poulenc is a piano concerto for ballet, based on a vague story about Diana and her nymphs dancing at dawn, and her meeting with Apollo (who, however, remains unseen), and the choreography is just as vague as the libretto. It lacks fluidity, the mainly conventional steps seem only a means of getting from one pose into another, and the dramatic gestures are meaningless without a story to convey. There was only a limited attempt to translate the music and its basic idea into movement: to show who she was, Diana was simply given a bow, but it was not incorporated into the dancing and consequently proved a nuisance to her as well as to the nymphs who had to bring and take it away. The company and Margot Werner as Diana made about the best of what they were given to dance. Werner is a beautiful dancer with a capacity of broad movements, but she should try to avoid mannerisms in her ports de bras that are out of keeping with the style of her dancing.

Wilhelm Killmayer, one of Germany's promising young composers, terms his *Buffonata* a "ballet chanté", i.e., he has soloists and a full opera chorus in the orchestra pit. They sing the story that is illustrated by the dancers on the stage. It is a commedia dell' arte type of spectacle in which the stock figures perform seven scenes demonstrating women's many ways of deceiving men. The music is witty and uncomplicated in its forms, and the whole thing could be great fun. But as it is, it lacks unity of style. The choreography is an unfortunate mixture of pantomime and steps from the classical dance, and at times the action on the stage seems all too independent from the music. On the other hand it contains quite a number of really funny ideas, some of which, however, lose their effect by exaggeration, lengthy repetition, or careless execution. The dancers (Dulce Anaya, Heino Hallhuber, Paul Wuensch, Wolfgang Reuter, Hannes Winkler, Hans Schöner, and Ronald Frazier) successfully entered into the mood of this burlesque that cannot really be called a ballet. All honours in this case as well as for *Orfeo* go to the singers: Kieth Engen, Lorenz Fehenberger, Friedrich Lenz, Carl Hoppe and Gertrude Vordemfelde, who brought out so perfectly the comedy of the music, and to Eva-Maria Rogner (Euridice) and Lorenz Fehenberger (Orfeo), and above all to Antonie Fahberg who in both works sang the extremely difficult soprano solos with a beautiful, crystalline voice and a fine sense for the different styles of the two works.

La Tragedia di Orfeo again is a work that tries to unite singing and dancing. But whereas this may be possible in a comedy, it seems out of place in a tragedy. In fact it at times brings it near to the ridiculous, when for example Orfeo expresses his grief at the loss of Euridice in an aria and the dancer accompanies this by a series of arabesques and pirouettes. Each medium has its own laws of expression; a combination seems to neutralize rather than to heighten the effect and in any case one detracts from the full appreciation of the other. Killmayer composed his *Orfeo* very much in the style of his teacher Carl Orff, only much noisier. Rosen in his choreography remains very conventional. It appeared rather unorganised in the mass scenes, especially in the dance of the Maenads after Euridice's death, and I am convinced that the work would win a lot both from the point of view of music and of dancing if the curtain would drop at the moment of her death, as the music then degenerates into mere rhythmical shouting. Heino Hallhuber as Orfeo was forced into a series of noble poses which he executed with due elegance. Sonia

Continued on page 22

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BALLET GUIDE

FESTIVAL BALLET AT ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL

w/c 7th Aug.		*The Snow Maiden*
14 - 16th	„	*Swan Lake Act II, Romeo and Juliet, Prince Igor,* and Hungarian dances by Szuzsa Kun, Ferenc Havas and Victor Fulop
17 - 23rd	„	*The Snow Maiden*
24 - 26th	„	*Swan Lake Act II, Scheherazade, Graduation Ball*
28th Aug. - 2nd Sept.		*The Snow Maiden*
4 - 9th	„	International Guest Artist Week
7th	„	Birthday Gala
11 - 16th	„	*The Snow Maiden*

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THE ROYAL BALLET AT COVENT GARDEN

13th Sept.	Wed.	(eve)	*La Fille Mal Gardée* (Nerina, Blair)
15th „	Fri.	(eve)	*Lady and the Fool* (Page, Hynd, Powell) *Diversions* (Beriosova, Macleary, Lane, Usher) (World Première) *Jabez and the Devil* (Sibley, Macleary, Grant) (World Première)
19th „	Tues.	(eve)	Programme as for the 15th
23rd „	Sat.	(eve)	*Les Patineurs* (Shaw) *Giselle* (Fonteyn, Blair)
26th „	Tues.	(eve)	*La Fille Mal Gardée* (Nerina, Blair)
28th „	Thurs.	(eve)	*Les Patineurs* (Gilpin) *Giselle* (Fonteyn, Blair)
30th „	Sat.	(eve)	*Lady and the Fool* (Beriosova, Hynd, Powell) *Jabez and the Devil* *Diversions*

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EDUARDO AND NAVARRA

w/c 14th Aug.	Two week season at the Library Theatre, Manchester. The Company are taking part in this year's Arts Festival at the Queen's Hall, Barnstaple, Devon (two perfs. 23rd Sept.).
w/c 25th Sept.	The Theatre Royal, Exeter.

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL
at the Empire Theatre, 20th Aug. to 9th Sept. a season of works in which music, ballet, drama, operetta and pantomime all combine. The last week of the Festival (4th-9th Sept.) the programme will consist of three works. Production by Western Theatre Ballet. Lotte Lenya will star in the Brecht-Weill classic *The Seven Deadly Sins.* Anya Linden will play the dancing "Anna".
Opening the programme will be the first performance in this country of Darius Milhaud's *Salade.* Choreography by Western Theatre Ballet's Peter Darrell.
The second piece of the evening will be Stravinsky's *Renard.* Alfred Rodrigues is the choreographer.

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August 7-12	**The Snow Maiden**
August 14-16	**Swan Lake Act II** **Romeo and Juliet** **Prince Igor** and Hungarian Dances by **Zsuzsa Kun, Ferenc Havas, Victor Fulop** of the Budapest Opera
August 17-23	**The Snow Maiden**
August 24-26	**Swan Lake Act II** **Scheherazade** **Graduation Ball**
August 28-September 2	**The Snow Maiden**
September 4-9	**International Guest Artist Week** — details to be announced
September 7	**Birthday Gala**
September 11-16	**The Snow Maiden**

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Arova was a tender, lyrical Euridice and danced beautifully in the pas de deux which is the best part of the work and the only one that can be called ballet.

Helmut Jürgens and Charlotte Flemming designed a charming, witty decor and colourful costumes for *Buffonata.* While Jürgen's scenery for *Orfeo* and Jörg Zimmermann's for *Aubade* were impressive in their economy, Flemming's costumes for both works were less successful in their variety of colours and forms.

Swan Lake **with Beryl Grey and Bryan Ashbridge (10th June)**

To the Munich balletomane this evening came as a bitter disappointment. While at last year's festival it looked as if the company were on their way at last to develop a steady technical foundation and style we had to realize now that this promise is not to be fulfilled. The dancing throughout the evening was careless and uninspired, and the whole ballet looked pitifully under-rehearsed—(no wonder when the ballet master concentrates all his energies on TV shows, and the production of operas and plays, preferably in far off cities.)

The first act is almost unbearably dull and it was not helped by the presence of an obviously bored Prince. Throughout the ballet Ashbridge gave a rather uneven interpretation of the rôle, changing between very commonplace gestures and truly noble demeanour. Beryl Grey was given a warm welcome and won enthusiastic applause for her beautifully harmonious strong dancing and her well-balanced interpretation of the dual rôle. She has wonderfully broad, sweeping movements and a simple, royal line, that give her a natural authority, and her Odette radiates great warmth of feeling. As the evil Odile her dancing becomes more assertive, commanding admiration, but without losing its grace and fluidity. This Odile is a skilful actress, and it is fascinating to watch the change of expression during a grand rond de jambe when she exchanges a quick understanding glance with the Magician and then turns to Siegfried with a seducing, tender smile. Ashbridge's dancing in this act was good without special brilliance.

Unfortunately the guests were handicapped by the fact that they were only granted one single rehearsal with the company, and that Heinrich Bender had conducted *Swan Lake* only once before and is a newcomer to ballet altogether. He has still to find a way of combining correct tempi for the dancers with an artistic interpretation of the score. Long familiarity makes one increasingly aware of the piercing ugliness of Daydé's scenery and costumes, especially for Acts I and III.

Les Sylphides, Still Point, The Legend of Joseph **(11th June)**

What a pleasant surprise after the miserable *Swan Lake* to see an exact execution of *Les Sylphides* the next day. In the corps de ballet it was neatly danced without a touch of romanticism, but then this is seldom achieved anywhere at all. Inge Bertl has improved considerably in the Valse ; she is not a lyrical dancer and her simple, clean dancing is better than any unsuccessful attempts at romanticism. Annette Chappell did the best Mazurka seen at the State Opera so far. She has developed a beautifully light jump and may in time capture the poetry of Fokine's masterpiece, if she pays more attention to her arms. It is astonishing how well Dulce Anaya manages to create the right atmosphere and to make one believe she is carried away by the music, while she is not really a musical dancer. She does not feel the music but rather counts it. It is above all her natural lightness that helps her in this rôle. Winfried Krisch has an elegant, high jump, and he was a truly romantic Poet dancing in a state of somnambulistic enchantment.

Todd Bolender's *Still Point* was given a moving interpretation by Inge Bertl and Paul Wünsch, well assisted by the very promising Edith Demharter and Monika Müller, Hans Schöner and Hannes Winkler.

The Legend of Joseph is one of the best works in the Munich repertoire. Richard Stauss' rich music demands a grand spectacle and Heinz Rosen's talent is more for lavish production than for actual choreography. Also, the Munich Company is usually better in demi-caractère work when not too exact a technique is required. Peggy Van Praagh remarked upon this fact when she produced them in *The Rake's Progress,* and this has not changed very much. Joseph is one of the outstanding rôles of Heino Hallhuber. He is convincing in the detachment from his surroundings when he dances his faith. In his innocence Joseph does not quite understand what is going on around him and so he is bewildered more than disgusted at Potiphar's advances. Potiphar on this occasion was Margot Werner who had the difficult task of replacing Natasha Trofimova in a role that she has made so very much her own by her fine artistry. Werner never tried to imitate her, and where Tofimova gave us a deeply moving, tragic Potiphar, whose long repressed desire for human sympathy overwhelms her and leads her a perverse way, Werner from the beginning made it clear that her Potiphar acts very consciously, and that her motive is pure lust. This cuts out all sympathy from the audience who shivers at the erotic intensity of this beautiful, satanic creature who moves with the natural wild grace of a panther. When she does not get her will, she will have her revenge, but to see the failure of this excites her wrath beyond control—she kills herself in a kind of wild pleasure. It was a fascinating portrayal, but Margot Werner must be careful not to overdo the lascivious side of the rôle. Inge Bertl as Sulamith showed excellent acrobatic dancing.

The Scapino Ballet

On May 28 and 29 the Scapino Ballet paid a visit to Munich. This company from Holland sees its principal aim in the entertainment of children and in making them acquainted with the art of ballet. Therefore it uses only very simple music and choreography and pretty, colourful decor, and it has Scapino tell the story of each scene in detail before the curtain rises. However, I believe that the choreographers underrate the intelligence of a child, which leads them to an oversimplified choreography tending to become dull. On the other hand, the simpler the pattern of the dances the more evident is an untidy technique, and this is a very weak point with the whole company. This rather spoilt the fairy tale *The Princess on the Pea* which contained some very nice scenes. The second part of the programme consisted of various short numbers, the best of which was a delightfully humorous sketch *The First Ball,* danced with great charm by Puck Scherpenisse and Tom de Graaf. The scene of Hungarian folklore, four negro spirituals and a modern solo were less successful, and Alexandra Danilova's *Springtime in Vienna* was very reminiscent of *Beau Danube,* but nicely danced. The most popular figure with the children, however, was the merry, agile Scapino of Mieke Last.

INGE ZÜRNER

To be continued next month

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RECORD GUIDE

Bach and Ballet

Johann Sebastian Bach's works have been used by twentieth century choreographers to an amazing degree, with the result that many of us now realize he is very far from being dry—a criticism so often made. How perfectly his music has expressed the ballets of Ashton, Balanchine, Charrat, Fokine, Humphrey and Petit to quote but a few. And it is without reservation that I strongly recommend to you three of H.M.V's recordings of Yehudi Menuhin with Elaine Shaffir, flute, Archie Camden, bassoon, Kinloch Anderson, harpsichord, and the Bath Festival Chamber Orchestra which Menuhin directs. I reviewed the *Brandenburg Concertos* in *Ballet Today*, March 1960, but as good as this mono version was, the stereo, ASD327-8, is most definitely superior. This was followed by the four *Orchestral Suites*, ASD404-5 (mono ALP 1822-3), and now *The Musical Offering*, ASD414 (mono ALP1839).

Menuhin has always had a vast following of admirers since he was but a boy and Elgar honoured him. However it is in recent years that he has broadened his approach to music and his insight in Bach's works is quite phenomenal. With the wonderful co-operation of the soloists, every player of the orchestra and the fine recordings, I doubt if these three issues are likely to be surpassed for many a long day.

Daphnis et Chloé

Pierre Monteux has the advantage over Antal Dorati in this exquisite ballet of Ravel's, as it was he who conducted its first performance at the Chatelet in 1912 for Diaghilev. However there is little to choose between these two great conductors' performances with the L.S.O., Decca SXL2164 (mono LXT5633) and the Minneapolis S.O., Mercury MMA11015 mono only, respectively. The playing of their orchestras is of a high standard and both get the full excitement where the score demands. Subtlety and delicacy abound and although I do not wish to put off Dorati collectors, I find Monteux' smooth phrasing and flowing line more rewarding. In fact it is a record that I value very highly indeed, particularly the stereo version which is able to create the true atmosphere that is needed.

For those who will be satisfied with the second suite, there is Ansermet's elegant and sensitive rendering on Decca SXL2273 (mono LXT5633). The record is of outstanding value as it includes the same composer's *Alborado del Gracioso*, *Le Tombeau de Couperin* and *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*, all of which have been choreographed in recent times and Ansermet's real interest in Ravel catches the atmosphere of each piece.

Schéhérazade

This new recording of Ansermet's with the Suisse Romande Orchestra on Decca SXL2268 is quite amazing and I doubt if there is a stereo disc that comes near it. It has a richness of sound and a brilliance, born of clarity, balance and depth, which delights the ear and does not, in the course of time, irritate it as happens too often when a recording is labelled as being "brilliant". Technically it is an exhibition piece and Decca are to be heartily congratulated. Ansermet's rendering is very fine but although there is no lack of romantic atmosphere, it has not the thrill of those vivid splashes of colour together with the inspired deftness of touch which Sir Thomas Beecham conjured from his vast palette on H.M.V. ASD251. Of course the Beecham recording is not of the present exceptional quality and in addition Ansermet includes the *Polovtsian Dances* from *Prince Igor* (Decca mono LXT5628, H.M.V. mono ALP1564).

Carmen

A disc entitled "French Romantic Music" and the conductor being Sir Thomas is sufficient recommendation for me and he does not fail one. As a reminder of Roland Petit's *Carmen*, we have the first suite—the four preludes—in a rendering that has no peer. Then the overture to Chabrier's opera, *Gwendoline* and Fauré's charming *Dolly Suite*, on which Beecham bestows such tender and loving care—his very last recording. It was used in Walter Gore's *The Gentle Poltergeist* and also by Charles Nicoll for his ballet, *Dolly*, in America. The recording is very good but issued in mono form only, H.M.V. ALP1843.

Prince Igor

Matacic's Russian concert which I reviewed in *Ballet Today*, November 1959, now appears in stereo, Columbia SAX2327. The performances of all the works, the overture, march and Polovtsian dances from Borodin's *Prince Igor*, Moussorgsky's *A Night on the Bare Mountain* and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Russian Easter Festival Overture*, were quite startling and now they gain considerably from the two channel version.

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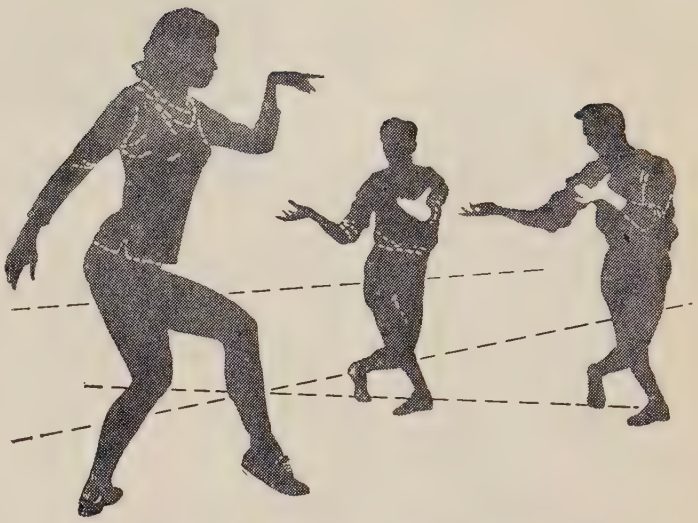

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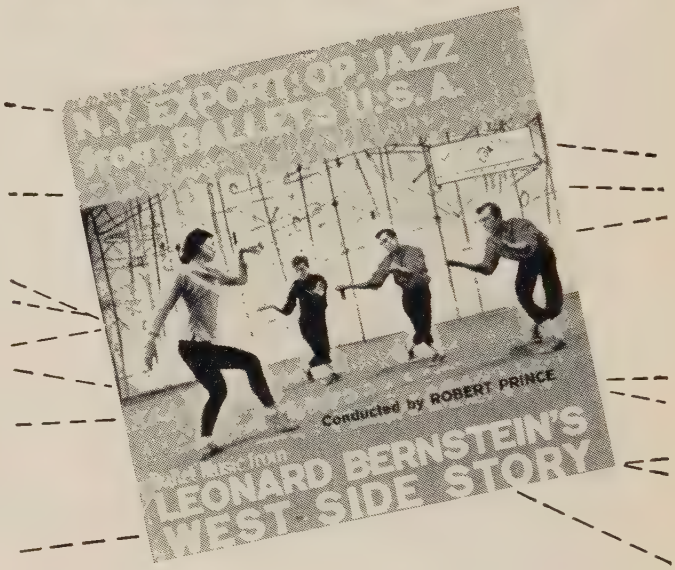

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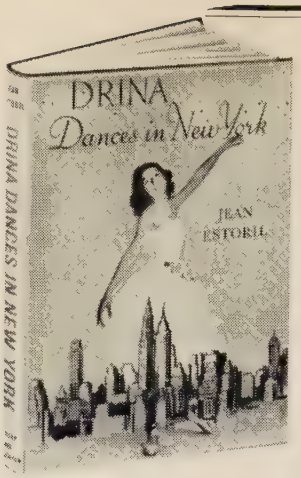

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If you were present at the Midlands Festival of Ballet in July you might like to read the stories of the participating stars. They were published as follows:—

Rosella Hightower	Sept. 1958	(Price 1/6d.)
Colette Marchand	Nov. 1958	,, ,,
Milorad Miskovitch	Feb. 1959	(Price 2/0d.)
Natalie Krassovska	Oct. 1959	,, ,,
Carla Fracci	Nov. 1959	,, ,,
John Gilpin	Dec. 1959	,, ,,

Margarethe Schanne
Kjeld Noack
Andre Prokovsky
} to be published in future issues

All from Ballet Today Office, 15 Upper Brighton Road, Surbiton, Surrey

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BALLET TODAY MAGAZINE

EDITED and Published by

ESTELLE HERF

from 15, Upper Brighton Road, Surbiton, Surrey, England, to whom all Editorial, Advertising and other communications should be addressed.

PUBLISHING DATE:

The fourth Thursday in every month except the two combined issues each year (Jan./Feb. and Aug./Sep.) which are published on the second Thursday in the month.

SUBSCRIPTION RATE:

For 10 issues a year, Inland and Overseas 23s. 6d. p.a. ($3.50). Single copies 2s. monthly, post 4d. extra. Readers in France can pay in their own currency in Paris, on application to *Ballet Today* office as above, or direct to Paris bank. (See coupon on right.)

Sole Agents :
Australasia : Gordon & Gotch Ltd.; South Africa: Central News Agency Ltd; Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland: Kingstons Ltd.
Printed by Clare o' Molesey Ltd., Island Farm Ave., West Molesey, Surrey, England.

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Dear Editor

The Value of a Dancer

Life is full of coincidences, but a three-
ided one has occurred within the last
nonth. First, a Kirov dancer named
udolf Nureyev (23 years old) received
remendous publicity when he left a com-
any which had trained him free of cost
o earn a higher salary with another troupe.
econdly, Olga Preobrajenska (93 years
ld) is lying seriously ill in a Paris hospital,
ntirely without financial resources and
ependent upon charity. Thirdly, Julia
arron (38 years old) has retired after
wenty-five years' continuous service with
he Vic-Wells/Sadler's Wells/Royal Ballet
ompanies, and without a pension, or
ven—so far as one can tell from the press
—a gratuity or farewell financial gift.

What inspired Nureyev to abandon a
areer which offered him fine professional
pportunities, absolute security and a pen-
on after 18 years' service (with the option
f staying on till 50, 60, or, so far as one
nows, 93) will probably never be known :
uite probably the young man does not
now himself, and certainly anyone can
ake any number of credible guesses,
hich the newspapers did throughout, the
nly snag being that they all guessed
omething different. If he is as fine a
ancer as is reported, one can only hope
hat he will not be merely a seven-days'-
onder : that we shall hear what happens
o him when the three months' permission
ranted him by the French is up : that
e realises that there is a thing called In-
ome Tax, and that he is not paid when
e is not working.

Preobrajenska was one of the world's
reatest dancers, and she, too, " chose
eedom ". She has taught in Paris con-
nuously for nearly forty years and among
er pupils were Toumanova and Baronova.
few years ago, through an unfortunate
gal tangle, she lost every penny of her
vings. She is now, at the age of 93,
esperately ill in a Paris hospital (in a
ountry where they have no Health Ser-
ce), having fallen and broken her hip.
is sad that an old lady of 93, the original
relude in *Les Sylphides* and Prima Bal-
rina of the Imperial Russian Ballet,
hould be penniless and alone in hospital.

The third incident referred to comes a
ttle nearer home. No member of the Eng-
sh ballet audience since 1936 needs to be
ld who Julia Farron is. After 25 years'
rvice she has left the Royal Ballet. I un-
erstand from the press that she received a
tribute " on the stage—verbal. Julia has
husband and a son, so doubtless she will
ot go hungry for the time being. Who
nows what will happen to her—and Mr.
ureyev—when they are 93 ? As Ophelia
id, " Lord, Lord, we know what we are,
e know not what we may be "".

Janet and Leo Kersley, Harlow

Donations may be sent to the
reobrajenska Fund, c/o Irina Baronova,
ittle Courtney, West Drive, Sunningdale,
erks.

Also see " Fund for Preobrajenska "
ditor's Log this issue.

When sending donations please mention
allet Today.

Dear Madam,

Last night of the Kirov

Every now and then applause in the gallery at Covent Garden seems to get out of hand, and an unpleasant scene developed as a result of this on the last night of the Kirov Ballet. A young lady so worked herself up during the performance that by the time it was the last act, she was nearly hysterical, screaming continuously at the top of her voice at the solo variations of Yuri Soloviev and Oleg Sokolov.

I do not entirely blame this young person in particular. It was indeed a great night and with her very limited experience of ballet, a very great one for her—and she was understandably very excited, but did she ever pause to think that there have been many equally fine Bluebirds and Princes seen at Covent Garden ? or, again, did she realise that in her excesses of applause she was in danger of forgetting the original object of her admiration and of thinking of herself as a star performer.

Far more, however, I criticize the adults with her who did nothing to restrain her—indeed they encouraged her. It was all the worse in that they were ballet goers of long standing who should have known better. The people concerned may have thought it was solely they who " won " the two encores for the audience. I would challenge this. Their outbursts disgusted my wife and I into silence and this was obviously the case for many others. Those forced encores left a nasty taste in the house and I could not fail to compare this with the 25th Birthday Gala performances of the Sadler's Wells when, in *Facade,* Fonteyn and Helpmann responded to the universal delight and demand of the whole theatre to repeat the Tango.

Yours faithfully,
Martin Lewis.

Ipswich

Festival Ballet's Cast Lists

Dear Editor,

After reading Miss Amanda Clarke's comments on my letter (April issue) on the subject of Festival Ballet's non-publishing of cast lists in advance I feel that silence would seem like an admission of defeat.

I regret that I gave Miss Clarke a somewhat incorrect impression of myself. Being now at an age when I have more years of ballet-going behind me than I should care to admit to, I hardly ever become " desperate to see a certain dancer in a certain role ", neither would I wish to carry things to the extremes of the " fan-worshipper " type referred to in the extract from Mr. Noel Goodwin's article. I am in full agreement with his quoted statement that " the younger artist is at least worthy of encouragement ". Some of my most enjoyable evenings or matinées at Covent Garden are those spent watching some of the younger members of the Company dancing in rôles which are new to them. However, at Festival Hall, after discovering from my programme who is to dance in *The Nutcracker* only a few days ahead, it has sometimes been impossible to get seats (at a suitable price) owing to booking having already been going on for about six weeks.

So, I still persist in my view that Festival Hall audiences should have the opportunity of knowing who will be dancing, when booking—if only so that they may make a point of seeing the said younger artists ! After all, it would be quite possible to book for two or three performances of a ballet and to see the same leading ballerina each time. If, as her letter would seem to convey, Miss Clarke has really never been ' guilty ' of booking anywhere to see any particular portrayer of a rôle then I feel she must be in the minority.

I trust that Miss Clarke will take these remarks only in the friendly spirit in which they are intended. Indeed I wish her, as well as myself, many more years of happy ballet-going—each in our individual way of enjoying it—and if Festival Ballet ever do begin to announce casts well in advance (The Royal Ballet came to it eventually) then we shall both be content. She can continue to book ' blind ' if she wishes and I shall continue to be,

Yours sincerely,
The same " discriminating ballet-goer "

Pen-Friend Wanted

Dear Mrs. Herf,

As I am a regular reader of your wonderful magazine *Ballet Today*, I have taken the liberty of writing to you to ask a favour. Yours is the only address I know of in England.

You see, I am desirous of corresponding with a male or female aged 22-25 or over who is interested in ballet or theatregoing.

I myself visit Melbourne regularly to attend the many live stage productions and symphony orchestra concerts. Prior to my joining the Women's Australian Air Force, I attended ballet classes in Brisbane at the Lisner Ballet Academy.

I enjoy reading *Ballet Today* very much indeed. It is an excellently compiled and published magazine and keeps one well informed on Ballet in general throughout the various countries. I hope this fine magazine will be published for many more years to come. I eagerly await the arrival each month of my copy.

Thanking you, and hoping most sincerely that you will be in a position to fulfil my request, I am

Yours faithfully,
Clare Macartney

Replies should be adressed to W 19966, ACW Macartney C., C/- A.R.D.U. RAAF Base, Laverton, Victoria, Australia.

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Peter van Dijk with Jacqueline Rayet in *Unfinished Symphony* by Schubert
Photo: Rudolf Betz

THE CAREER OF

PETER VAN DIJK

by

INGE ZÜRNER

PETER VAN DIJK was born in Bremen, but soon afterwards his parents moved to Berlin. His mother had wanted to be a dancer but had been denied this wish. However, when her two daughters were old enough, she sent them to a ballet school. When one of them gave up dancing young Peter took her place at the barre, not really with the prospect of becoming a dancer but just for exercise. At the age of ten he went to Tatjana Gsovsky's school and received all his professional training there. Even then he was not sure whether he wanted to be a dancer. "Actually, I never really decided to make ballet my career," he remembers "I simply liked to dance. It grew on me quite naturally."

In 1946 Tatjana Gsovsky became ballet director of the re-opened Berlin Opera and she engaged Peter van Dijk as a soloist. Among his first roles were the Blue Bird, the Spirit of the Rose in *Spectre de la Rose*, and Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*. Already during this early period of his career he had a chance to try his hand at choreography and he was quite successful with *History of a Soldier*. In 1950-51 he was at Wiesbaden as premier danseur and choreographer. For the first time he was responsible for an entire evening, with *Pélléas et Mélisande* to music by Schönberg and a Henze symphony "Evocation d' Apollon". In May 1952 he joined Janine Charrat's company and soon became its leading soloist, dancing various classical pas de deux like *Black Swan*, *Don Quichotte*, and *Blue Bird*, as well as in *Les Algues*, *Geste pour un Génie*, the Grieg *Concerto* and *Grands Pas Classiques*. With Charrat he toured Europe, and danced a season in Paris in 1953 and in London one year later.

As a result of this Paris season he was invited as guest artist to the Opéra, and in November 1954 he danced the Prince in *Aurora's Wedding*. Immediately afterwards he signed a contract making him a permanent member of this company. It is a very rare honour for any dancer trained outside the Opéra to be invited there as a guest artist but it is quite exceptional to be engaged as regular danseur étoile. In due time Peter van Dijk appeared in all the classical roles of the repertoire, as well as creating quite a number of parts, notably the Poet in *Les Noces Fantastiques*, the Young Man in *Chemin de Lumière*, the poet in *Les Sylphides* and recently Prince Siegfried in Bourmeister's new version of *Swan Lake*. During the last years he was also asked to do several choreographies at the Opéra Comique. He won great public acclaim for his *Peau de Chagrin* and the critic's prize for 1959 for his beautifully poetic *Symphonie Inachevée*. Besides, he devised a number of ballets for performances of the Jeunesses Musicales, the most important being *La Nuit Transfigurée* (Schönberg) and *L'Echarpe* (Semenov). He usually dances the principal role of his own works.

In 1960 he was invited as guest star and choreographer to the Hamburg State Opera, where he has successfully produced his *Peau de Chagrin*, *Symphonie Inachevée* and *Pélléas et Mélisande*, and he created a ballet to Oliver Messiaen's music, *Turangalila*. Early this year he began to work on a new production of Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*. His plan to create a full-length ballet did not meet with general approval from the critics. "But," he argues, "a three act ballet has so many advantages. It allows the dancers to concentrate on one role and one style. So they have an opportunity to create a real character, which is extremely difficult, if not impossible, if you have to slip from one role into another within a fifteen minutes' interval that scarcely gives you time enough to change and make up. But there is another point, too. An audience goes to the theatre to see "Hamlet" or "King Lear". You talk about going to hear "Madame Butterfly" or "Aida", but you simply *go* to the ballet. Many people don't even bother to look up the newspaper to choose their programme deliberately. Sometimes I feel as if I was dancing in a vacuum. We have to create all the atmosphere first. However, I am sure that this indifference may be altered by giving the audience full-length ballets, so that they come to see *Swan Lake* or *Cinderella* and not just some dancing." The great success of his *Romeo and Juliet* and of other three act ballets which have been produced everywhere in recent years prove that he is right.

Peter van Dijk is happy that he has already had such a big chance as a choreographer. "It was very difficult, but wonderful work," he says. "The score and the story demand many different styles—there are Romeo and Juliet who dance their love in a pure world of beauty, there are the street scenes which demand colourful effects, there is the brilliant, gay Mercutio, the solemn Friar Lawrence, the ball-room scene and there are the mime parts such as Capulet and Montague. All these styles have to be clearly defined and yet the ballet must form one great unity."

Peter van Dijk can already look back on a varied, extremely successful career, the fruit of years and years of steady effort. By his fine, secure technique, his beautiful lyrical line and intelligent artistry, he has won himself a firm place among the world's best dancers. Already he has proved an accomplished choreographer and one who promises still greater things for the future.

PETER VAN DIJK
in the Blue Bird pas de deux

Photo : Michel Petit

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